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**BOOK FOR PARENTS.**

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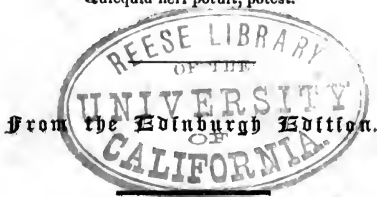
THE  
GENIUS AND DESIGN  
OF THE  
**DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION,**  
WITH ITS  
UNTRANSFERABLE OBLIGATIONS  
AND  
PECULIAR ADVANTAGES.

---

BY CHRISTOPHER ANDERSON.

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Respicere, Aspice, Prospice.  
Quicquid fieri potuit, potest.



**BOSTON:**  
PERKINS, MARVIN & CO., AND WILLIAM PEIRCE.  
NEW YORK: LEAVITT, LORD & CO.  
PHILADELPHIA: HENRY PERKINS.

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1834.

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.



ONE of the most favorable indications of the present period is the fact, that so much attention is directed to the consideration of domestic relations and duties. The prominent feature of the dreadful degeneracy which Malachi and other prophets foretold would prevail among God's ancient covenant people, just before the coming of the Messiah, and bring the desolating curse of Heaven upon them, if not reformed, was the alienation of parents from their children, and of children from their parents—the general neglect of domestic obligations and duties, Mal. iv. 6. And the way in which the nation was to be res-pited from deserved and impending destruction, was by 'turning the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers'—bringing back the people to a degree of proper attention to domestic obligations and duties, 'lest Jehovah should come and smite the land with a curse.'

And who that is informed in regard to the calamities with which a righteous Providence has visited certain nations in modern times, and in regard to the state of degeneracy into which domestic society had sunk in those nations, does not see that the principle involved is applicable to all nations, in all ages?

How important, then, the domestic constitution? The FAMILY, more emphatically than any other social organization, except the Church, is God's own production. He himself directly ordained it, and has ever shown to it a special regard. No other constitution of which we have any knowledge is so exact a similitude of his own moral government. Though, in every instance of its existence, itself brief and transitory, and to cease with the last generation of men on the earth, its influences go down, from generation to generation and from age to age, into and all along the ages of eternity. They, more than any other, commonly, form the future man and woman, and direct their influences, in their various relations, and on succeeding generations; and effect their eternal condition, and their influence on the eternity of others from generation to generation. It is, in its Author's design, the grand instrument of making men and women happy and useful in all the circumstances and relations of life, and happy and useful in His moral kingdom forever. And how dreadfully reverse in the results, when its design is frustrated, no tongue of mortal can tell—eternity alone will disclose.

How vitally important, then, to every child, and brother and sister, and employer and domestic, and especially to every parent, to understand the nature and influences, the responsibilities and duties, of this constitution. In this view, it is matter of congratulation that such works as the Family Monitor, the Mother at Home, the Child at Home, are published in such quick succession, and so extensively read. These works exhibit, in an instructive and interesting manner, the *details* of the obligations and duties of the various family relations. In connection with them there is wanting, to be read and studied, an exhibition of the *principles* on which those obligations and duties rest, and by which they are enforced. To exhibit these is the

design of the following treatise. And this most important design its author has ably and successfully accomplished. A bare inspection of the table of contents will show that the discussions in the work are fundamental. Its exhibitions are eminently scriptural, presenting a richness and variety of illustration, drawn from that inexhaustible storehouse, often new, and always pleasing and instructive. Its reasonings are sober and conclusive; its appeals to observation and experience just and convincing. Its style, though not elegant, is not repulsive. To *thinking* persons, both its argument and its style will be acceptable, and its conclusions and counsels highly satisfactory.

If some of the remarks, particularly in Part I. Sect. 7, and Part II. Sect. 4, should be thought, at first view, to have an unfavorable bearing on a portion at least of the Sabbath school and other kindred efforts of the present day, a closer examination will show that this is not their design. They are directed to plans and efforts which would supersede the responsibilities and duties of the parental relation. Sabbath school and other kindred efforts, when properly regarded and applied, are helps to the discharge of those duties and responsibilities. If intended, in any instance, or allowed, to supersede them, they are so far justly liable to the censure expressed, and which was designed by the author for other plans and efforts, in their nature of such an unhappy tendency. The remarks referred to may also excite profitable reflection and inquiry whether, while our exertions for the intellectual and moral improvement of the mass of the children of the ignorant and irreligious portions of the community are not remitted, but prosecuted with increased vigor, more direct attention should not be given to the parents of such children, that the *order*, and thus more effectually the reality, of the divine prediction may be secured, 'He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the

children, and the heart of the children to their fathers; and thus 'make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'

The volume which it is the object of these remarks to introduce to the American public is a very able discussion of a most important subject, nowhere else, within my knowledge, treated in the same radical and thorough manner. It is eminently adapted to be useful; and I cannot but hope that it will be highly acceptable, especially to those sustaining the solemn and weighty responsibilities of the parental relation.

B. B. WISNER.

*Boston, May, 1834.*



## PREFACE.



SOME individuals, who have professed to look deeply into the structure of human society, tell us that analogy has much in store for man; because, though it is not infallible, it is that powerful engine or telescope of the mind, by which it is marvellously assisted in the discovery of both physical and moral truth. The great expectations which are entertained, they would found upon the extraordinary discoveries which have been made in physics, under the guidance of analogy: that powerful engine, they say, in the mind of a Newton, having discovered to us the laws of other worlds; and in that of Columbus, having put us in full possession of our own. "Shall some discoveries in physics," it has then been said, "be so important as to produce a complete revolution in society, and others so powerful, that the very inventors of them have not as yet dared to apply them; and shall not discoveries in morals be allowed a still more paramount and universal influence—an influence the greater in proportion as matter is inferior to mind?" Under the influence of these anticipations, says the same individual, "I foresee the period when some new and parent idea in morals, the matrix of a better order of things, shall reconcile us more completely to God, to nature, and to ourselves."

Between discoveries in physics, and, what have been called, morals, there is, unquestionably, one strong analogy—that they are new only to *us*; all such discoveries being merely the observation of what *has* been true, from the beginning of the creation. To this parent idea in morals, therefore, many will not object, if it is shown to be older than the ages of nations and cities, and if it involves nothing more than what has been already revealed by God in his word; just as all discoveries in physics, though not sooner observed, acquire peculiar interest from the conviction, that the same objects

had been before the eyes of all preceding generations. At the same time, never let it be forgotten, that there is one material distinction between, not only the investigation, but the effects of discovery, in physics and in morals. Discoveries in the former are often flattering to human vanity, and conducive to the comfort or convenience of this transitory life only. Morals, if they deserve the name, carry us above the starry firmament, and point beyond the grave; and in morals, since man has thrown off his allegiance to God, any discovery, if we may so speak, must be expected, not only to remind him of his apostacy, or rebellious disposition, but to be resisted by all the vicious propensities of our nature; and before it can meet with a *practical* attention, it must be accompanied or followed by an *influence* from above—precisely the same quarter from whence the Revelation of God itself has come.

Yes, all the discoveries which man can make, or expect, in morals, are already before his eye, in the pages of divine revelation; and although “he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the Author of Nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it, as are found in the constitution of nature;”<sup>\*</sup> still he will tell you, that, as the Sun and the Moon have been apparent from the beginning, to every man endowed with eyesight, so there are cardinal truths in the firmament of divine revelation, to which every enlightened mind, in all ages, has cordially subscribed. But, oh! were Christians, under the power of a docile spirit, only once brought to bestow but the same patience of research on that blessed Book, which the astronomer, and naturalist, or geologist, have done upon the world of Nature, then would they serve their generation with superior effect indeed, and leave discoveries behind them too, which their successors might follow up, when even these heavens and this earth were no more. The discovery of only one fixed star interests the world, and points the telescope to the same spot, in every land where it is known to be visible; but Christians in general, though living under a finer light, and placed in more favorable circumstances, are, alas! yet far from discovering, as they ought, a deeper and more general sympathy for discovery, in their appropriate sphere of research. When that day arrives, and arrive it will, benefits will accrue to man, infinitely superior to any which have resulted, from the most splendid secret that has ever been evolved from the firmament of heaven, or the bowels of the earth; and then will men say—“Thou hast magnified

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\* Origen.

thy word above all thy name." Meanwhile, such a spirit, if regulated by appropriate reverence, and caution, and patience, or, as the Scriptures themselves would express it, in one word, by the 'fear of the Lord,' would certainly lead to farther discovery of the 'hidden wonders' in divine revelation; which, even after all that have been observed, seem to be still as numerous as the stars of heaven. Then, too, would many a Christian find it not impossible to give various instances in proof, "that as the north star, though it be less luminous than many others, yet, by reason of its position, doth better guide the pilot than even the moon herself; so are there some texts in Scripture which, though less conspicuous in themselves, are, by reason of their relation to a context, more instructive than other more radiant passages."\*

Should any reader, then, be in pursuit of this "parent idea in morals, this matrix of a better order of things," let him feel no disappointment, though he should hear both philosophy and ethics say, it is not in us—or human sagacity, it is not in me; for, after all, perhaps he may find it within the narrow compass of a single human dwelling, where the Parent has lived from the beginning. And what if this parent idea should have been unfolded, with force and perspicuity, in what God himself hath said, respecting this singular little group of immortal beings? At all events, notwithstanding their many imperfections, by the time that the reader has finished these pages, perhaps he will agree with the writer, that, however slender the analogy, when once the analogy which does exist, between this small and unpretending Domestic Constitution and the Divine Government itself, is more deeply studied, and habitually regarded, we shall then, *and not till then*, be more completely reconciled to God, to nature, and ourselves.

In the present age, much has been said, and perhaps as much written, respecting *improvements in Society*, with comparatively but slender reference to the neglect of Parental Obligations, and the consequent abatement of Parental Authority—evils for which, by the will of God, Parents *alone* are responsible, and which they *alone* can rectify or remove. Every inquiry into faction and disorder, degeneracy in morals and increase of crime, must, of necessity, prove essentially defective, which does not embrace them, and the fulfilment or neglect of their obligations; for to whatever other expedients men may betake themselves, it is from the Parents, as such, themselves alone, over the broad surface of a city or a nation, that the restorative or remedy is to be sought and found.

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\* The Honorable Robert Boyle.

Institutions may be formed in aid of their neglect, and an artificial state of society may, for a time, seem to be very pleasing, more especially since it is of man's devising; but however kind in its intention, and benevolent in its aspect, all such aid will, in the end, only increase the appetite for help, where help is noxious, whenever it exceeds advice and warning.

Christianity, in its progress, it is true, has, in every land, whether civilized or savage, to fight every inch on its way; but still it comports with enlightened and impartial observation, that in the degeneracy or neglect of domestic duty, and the relaxation of parental authority, we see the most certain tokens of a nation approaching the brink of ruin, and the day of just retribution.

Before this neglect and relaxation, the huge monuments of commercial enterprise and art, the luxurious plenty of refined life, and the substantial enjoyments of all inferior ranks, will be swept away. Education as such, if by this is meant purchased tuition, of whatever description, or improvements in education, could not save such a people. The School of Learning and the School of Arts must prove alike in vain. The bands of human society, which no human legislation can supply, and for which human sagacity, at its full stretch, can devise no expedient, are, in such a case, loosened. What then, though every thing which can more speedily enlighten the infant mind, or regulate the more advanced periods of youth and manhood, be proposed? What though every thing which can profitably employ the vacant hour of the artisan be devised? Nay, what though methods are adopted with a view to the advancement of the kingdom of God, both abroad and at home? Does that nation forget, or seem to forget, all the while, not only that we are a governed race, but that by certain fixed principles and general laws we are governed by the Almighty?

Let but one only of these be disdained, or even forgotten—say, the imperious, and unchanging, and universal obligations of its domestic circle; then in vain shall that people apply many medicines—in vain devise prompt and efficient restoratives—in vain begin with the infant only, in order to banish the long-formed habits of the man. The cruel, or careless, or unprincipled devourers of the country's vital interests, are to be found neither in prisons nor in banishment, but below the domestic roof; and while they there remain, and there disdain, or only neglect their obligations; in spite of improvements in prison discipline, and continual transportation; in spite of the tread-wheel and the gibbet; nay, in spite of schemes formed in aid of parental negligence, though all the ingenuity



which belongs to human benevolence should never grow weary of devising and applying them; still juvenile delinquency goes on apace; the criminal calendar doubles; and the charge of the judge to the grand jury, is found, at the next assize, to have been only as water spilt upon the ground. His advice might be extolled, and even imbibed by some, but the *particeps criminis* was not present; perhaps I should rather say, *causa latet, vis est notissima*.

In such a melancholy state of things, however, it is very far from being only the lower, or the lowest orders, who are chargeable with delinquency or neglect. When society has been compared to a pillar, it is true, they have been considered as its base or support. But let Family Economy or Parental Obligations be neglected, what can wealth or sagacity avail? Then will every order of society prove alike infirm: the base, the shaft, and its capital, are seen in equal progress to decay; and if they are not levelled by the lightning of divine indignation, all alike must crumble into ruin.

If, therefore, at any period, the low and high, the rich and poor together, once ill of the same disease, should descend to one common grave, a serious and important question arises out of such a spectacle: From whence has the evil originated? I need not ask whether the Children, or even the youth, have ruined the nation? But has ignorance been more than a match for knowledge, and sagacity, and frequent occupation? Or has mere poverty risen up, and overwhelmed wealth and habitual ease? If not, then it appears as if only one question remained, Has the evil *descended*? So it should seem.

With regard to all ranks, it should never be forgotten, not only that the law of Heaven is one; but that the guilt of the superior class, must ever exceed that of the inferior. On this point, I am aware that one of our best Poets has been considered, by a few individuals, as occasionally too fastidious and severe; but whatever severity there may seem, to some ears, in the following lines, it will be found on reflection, I am persuaded, only in the truth which they express:—

“The course of human things, from good to ill,  
From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails.  
Increase of power begets increase of wealth;  
Wealth luxury, and luxury excess:  
Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague  
That seizes first the opulent, descends  
To the next rank contagious, and in time  
Taints downward all the graduated scale  
Of order, from the chariot to the plough.”\*

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\* Cowper.

The reader may perhaps now imagine, that, in such a case, the account must come to a close, and that one is shut up to the absolute necessity of merely saying—" *There is no hope; no!*" But I am far, very far indeed, from either thinking or saying this. Look over the state of the Jewish nation, at the moment when the Messiah appeared among them. One remedy then, after all, there is, as far as a remedy can prolong the existence of a nation, or preserve it from decline. No doubt, to some, the mortifying thought will immediately occur, that this remedy is not of human invention, nor is there in it any thing to gratify the vanity, or secure the applause, of a single human being! For the application of this remedy, too, no substitutes can be found; the most opulent and the humblest peasant being here invited to a subject equally incumbent upon both. So far, however, as the present writer is concerned, he must now refer to what follows, and leave the whole to the impartial reflections of his reader.

At the same time, he owes it to himself to state, that no individual can ever be more sensible than he is, of the imperfections which may perhaps be detected in every following section. In sincerity he says this, from a deep and abiding impression of the vital importance of the subject; its importance to man individually; to the well-being or moral health of families, in any nation, whatever be its form of political government; and to the best interests of the kingdom of God, now on its way to that purity and peace which assuredly await it, before time shall end. But were any man to delay, under such an impression, till he accomplished what might please himself, this very vanity might prevent him from being of the least service to the community. So far, therefore, from deprecating what has been called the severity of criticism, should any individual take the trouble to point out any mistake into which he has fallen, the Author will regard this as an evidence of interest in the subject itself; and if ever a second edition is called for, and the writer is alive, he will not fail to avail himself of any such remarks.

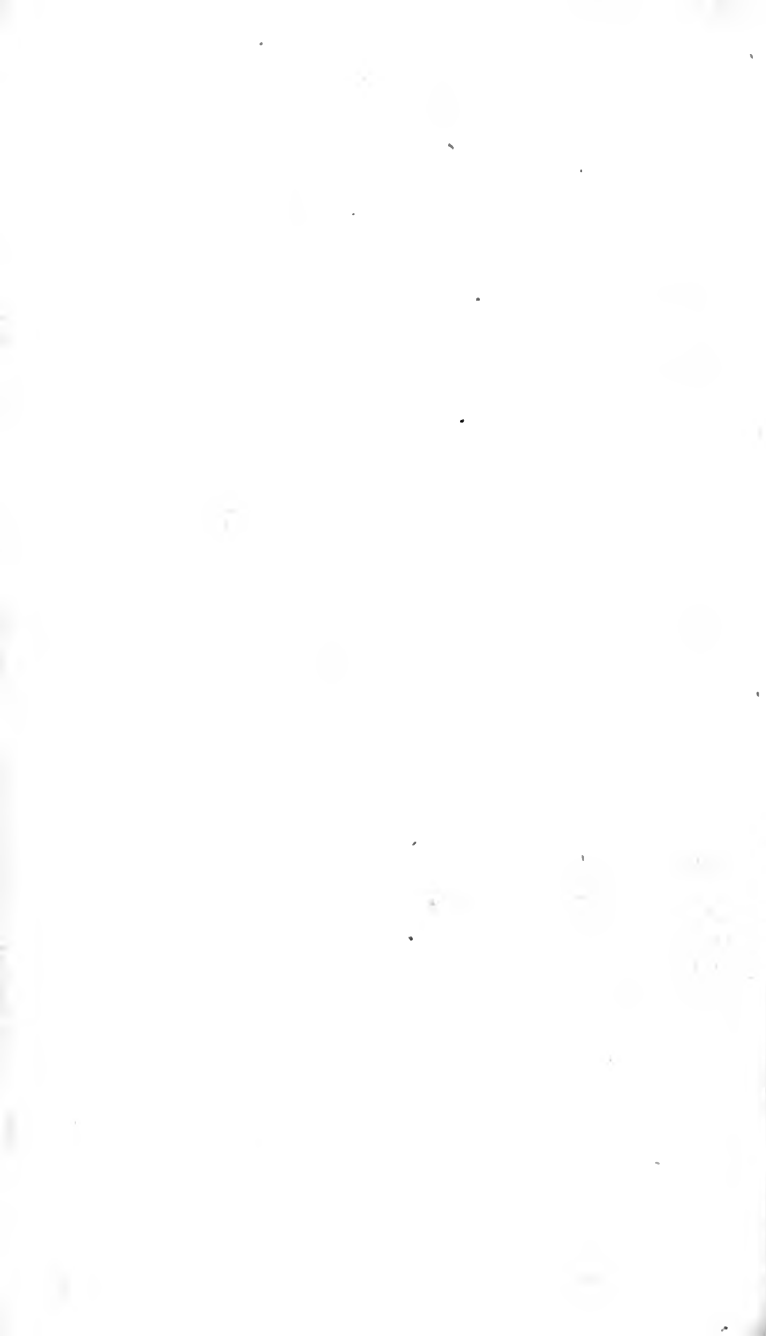
There is one passage of Sacred Writ, the last verse of the Old Testament, to which frequent reference is made. Though fully aware of different interpretations which have been put upon it, and the difficulty which some have expressed in regard to the precise import of the terms, 'Fathers' and 'Children,' after due consideration, the writer continued to abide by the meaning, which the words themselves express with great beauty and simplicity. This, it should be remembered, was a *prophecy*; and when the reader comes to peruse the proof of its fulfilment, he will, I presume, see no obscurity whatever, in the prophecy itself.

There are a very few quotations, perhaps three or four, in the following pages, where the name of the author is not mentioned, merely because, in one case, it seemed inexpedient on several accounts, and in another, unnecessary to refer to the volumes from whence they were taken. All the others are acknowledged in their respective places.

Written, as the volume has been, not only amidst innumerable interruptions, but in the depth of long-protracted domestic affliction, accompanied by bereavements repeated and severe, partly to preserve the mind from undue excess, in pondering over scenes and sources of enjoyment never to return, I am persuaded, that to all 'those who have felt sorrow,' and to whom 'sorrow is a sacred thing,' it will be no matter of surprise, should they meet with some imperfections, or the repetition of a similar idea. As to the subject itself, with the exception of only one, which he will not mention here, a more important one, and one more necessary to the vital interests of his native country, at the present moment, the writer is not able to conceive; and though placed in circumstances in some respects unfriendly to composition, he felt it incumbent upon him, if he could, to engage the ear, as well as the deliberate attention of Parents and the Heads of Families; more especially those Families where the Children are yet in infancy. The young and rising generation have also been kept in view throughout, so as, if possible, to interest the minds of those, who will become the parents of a future age.

In the meanwhile, could I but hope to reach the ear of Parents, whether in cities or in the country, whether in Great Britain, or in Ireland in whose welfare the writer has long felt so deep an interest, perhaps a perusal of the following pages might be of some service to them, and, as a consequence, to their Children; and though, at first sight, it may not appear, let them observe whether the subject here presented before their view, besides more important benefits, does not furnish one antidote, to the mistake or mere profession of Christianity, as well as to reckless, not to say unjust, commercial speculation.

*Edinburgh, 28th June, 1826.*



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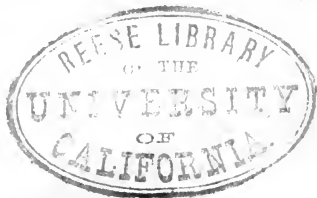
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN FAMILY OR DOMESTIC CIRCLE;  
INCLUDING ITS VARIOUS CONNECTIONS AND PECULIAR SANCTIONS;  
THE MORAL POWER OF WHICH IT IS SUSCEPTIBLE; WITH THE  
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## PART FIRST.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN FAMILY, OR DOMESTIC CIRCLE; INCLUDING ITS VARIOUS CONNECTIONS AND PECULIAR SANCTIONS; THE MORAL POWER OF WHICH IT IS SUSCEPTIBLE; WITH THE DANGER AND VANITY OF INTERFERENCE.

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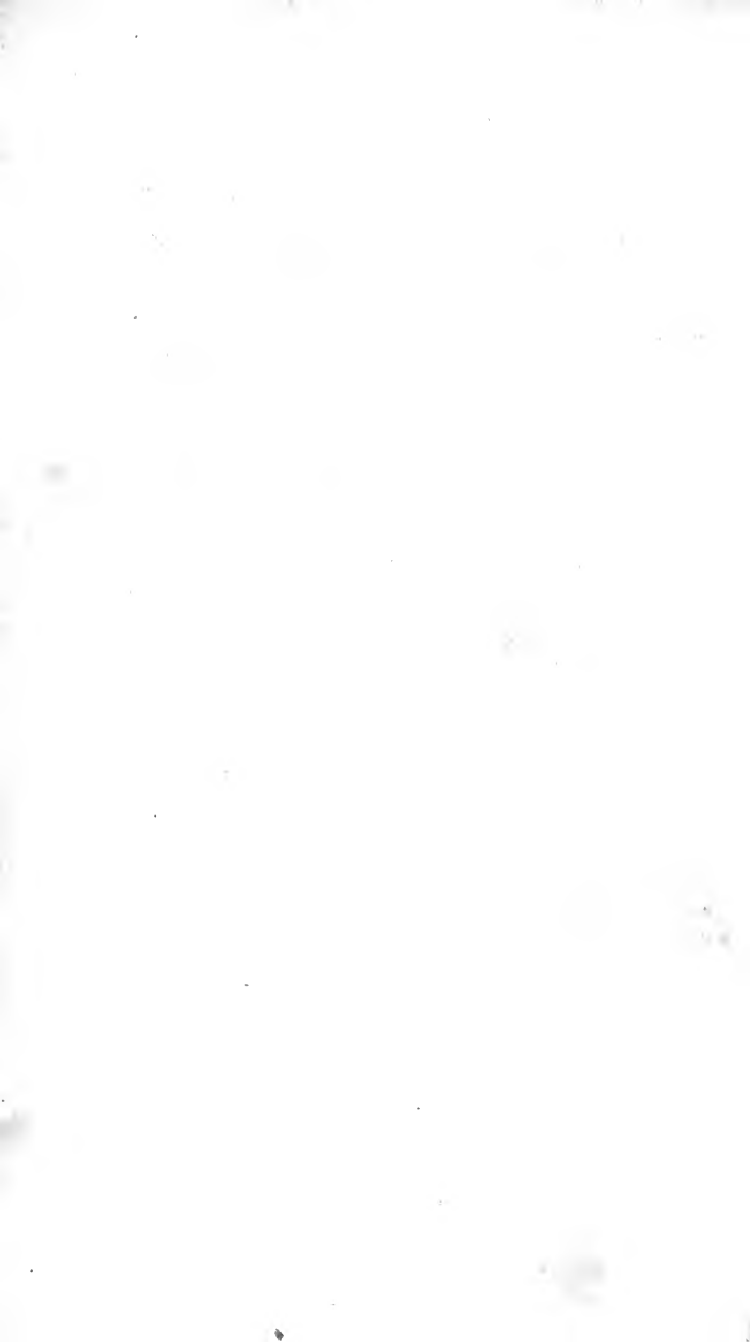
Reduce things to the first institution, and observe wherein and how they have degenerated; but yet ask counsel of both times: of the ancient time what is best, and of the latter time what is fittest.

BACON.

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Persons are elements of Families; Families are the elements of which both Churches, and Kingdoms, or Commonwealths, are composed and made up: and as the one sort of these is purely civil, the other purely sacred, that which is elementary unto both must be both.

HOWE.





# PART FIRST.

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## SECTION FIRST.

### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

The state of Judea at the period of the Messiah's Advent, conveyed to us in terms illustrative of the Domestic Constitution, and the extreme degeneracy of the Nation.

AMONG the various remarkable eras, to which the attention of man can be directed, there is not one to be compared, in point of interest or importance, with that in which the Saviour entered our world. The state of all nations, in remote or immediate connection with this mysterious event, may be and should be investigated; but the sources from whence information can be drawn, though not vague or uncertain, are opened chiefly to the learned and the studious. The moral and religious condition of that peculiar people, among whom He condescended to appear, is however not so veiled in obscurity; nay, it is remarkable that, to infinite wisdom, it seemed meet to foretell minutely, not only the time and circumstances of the Saviour's appearance, but the precise state of the Jewish nation at the moment of his advent. The volume of prophecy teems with references to this period:

even the close of the Old Testament is intended to describe the opening of the New; and the very last words of the last of the prophets, direct the eye to the harbinger of the Sun of Righteousness:—*He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.*

The phraseology adopted by Malachi, on this occasion, is certainly of a peculiar character; and it deserves more attention, from its being intended to describe the melancholy state of the Jewish nation, immediately preceding our Saviour's actual appearance in it. On the general complexion of society, it looks very hard; and even as though it were intended, by a master-stroke of the prophetic pencil, to depict wherein the greatest demoralization of a nation consists,—the dissolution of the Family compact. At the same moment, however, it points out the only way in which the tone of society may be restored; the only way in which, under such sad and degenerate circumstances, a general improvement may be attained, or at least an effectual one, so far as it goes.

But why, it may be inquired, adopt such a phraseology? Why not fix upon some of the other links in the chain of being; some of the other relative connections? Why not have said, He shall turn the heart of the masters to the servants, and the heart of servants to their masters,—the heart of kings, or of governors, to their subjects, and the heart of subjects to their rulers? If the general prevalence of religion throughout a nation be the object, would not this be a much more effectual method, and more likely to produce a permanent and public change? To all this I reply, without hesitation, in the negative. The precise terms of divine revelation are of great moment, and for them, as well as for the order in which these terms are introduced to our notice, the strongest arguments may, in numberless cases, be adduced, and so it seems here.

1. Such a phraseology most effectually embraces the body of a nation. Indeed, whatever may be the civil, the moral, or the religious condition, it at once fixes the mind on the broad surface of human society all over the world. The proportion of individuals who sustain neither of these relations is comparatively insignificant, while nearly the whole of human existence in this world is also embraced by the terms employed. How short, in almost all instances, is the period in which man sustains neither of these endearing relations! Suppose a man to be miserable first as a child, in consequence of the misconduct of his parents, and then miserable as a parent, in consequence of the misconduct of his children, and with him what a small proportion of the wick of 'life's poor shallow lamp' has burned brightly! Such a man may be said, 'never to have eaten with pleasure;' for so small is the space which you have left him to enjoy, that you may almost close the account by adding,—“all his days are sorrow, and his travail grief.”

2. The terms employed by Malachi have the advantage of presenting the individuals of any, or of every nation, and especially the Jewish people at that period, in one of the most affecting and solemn points of view.

'Fathers' and 'children,' are terms which remind us, not of consanguinity only, but of different periods in human existence: the former, now descending into the vale of years, are followed by the latter, all joyous and sportive, in the morning of their days; the sun which is rising on the one party, is now declining or setting on the other. This, too, is the generation going away, and the generation coming, between whom there exist connections of the most serious and important nature. It is the generation who ought to be distinguished for hearts of tenderness and for grey experience; who, after having trod-

den the greater part of this weary pilgrimage, are 'going away'—away to meet their Judge: and it is the generation following after them, in the same solemn path.

3. This division of a whole population may be said to enter most effectually into the *heart* of human society.

Not that society is uninterested in the other ties by which it is held together, and by which it may be described. Any measure which would generally or universally affect masters and servants not living under the same roof, or the governor and the governed in the same kingdom, must both engage and engross the public mind; but never can you so effectually penetrate into the whole economy of man, as by touching the hearts of both parents and children in a land. There is something at once so tender and so powerful in this relation, that, with only one exception, all others are weak in comparison. An appeal to this is irresistible. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, saith Jehovah, and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." "He only is left of his mother," said Judah, "and his father loveth him." Joseph might make himself strange to his brethren, and answer roughly too; but what could he say to this?

That the terms employed by the prophet are intended to reach the core of moral disease, may be seen in a very striking and melancholy point of view, if a nation is supposed to be in a state of degeneracy; for Malachi intends to mark a period of great and general degeneracy, and stronger terms he could not employ. It has been said,

When nations are to perish in their sins,  
'Tis in the church the leprosy begins.

Let this be granted; still there is a previous question. How did this leprosy commence in the church? The

church comes in contact with families; and from the bosom of those families has come the leprosy which primarily infects the church, and thus ultimately destroys the nation. As repentance and reformation in a community is found to originate with some one individual; so, did we know all, degeneracy in the church, and the torrent of immorality in a nation, might be traced to the bosom of a single family. Nor is this necessary: let only one parent relax and neglect his duty, and his example be followed, then all the powers of legislation, and all the precepts of Christianity, are in vain. The alienation, or even carelessness of the parental heart, much more the dissolution of the domestic tie, constitutes the most hopeless of all conditions: a nation *cannot* sink lower; for it marks the lowest step of human depravity, and just precedes the eventful moment, when God himself "smites the land with a curse." Modern times have furnished us with some dreadful illustrations. France was precisely in this state before the Revolution; and as this fretting leprosy still infests that fine country, one cannot help anticipating an evil day, which if the "hearts of the fathers are not turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers," must and will arrive. In ancient times also the fate of Sodom and the cities of the plain is awfully illustrative. Their signal overthrow may be distinctly traced to the want of *family* government: so, before that awful catastrophe, we find the Almighty on his way to the sad scene, calls for Abraham, saying, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty *nation*, and all the *nations* of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his *children* and his *household* after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that

which he hath spoken of him." What was this, if it was not saying in effect, "For I know Abraham, that he will act very differently from the men of Sodom, or even Lot himself, though he is not above the necessity of being confirmed in his principles?"

In the days of the Messiah, however, the state of Judea was much more melancholy than that of even these wicked cities. Under the energy of the means he employed, Tyre and Sidon would have repented, and Sodom itself remained. It was not merely that the tabernacle of David was fallen down, and in ruins; not merely that the sceptre was departed from Judah, and a Lawgiver from between his feet: it was not that Augustus had gained the sovereignty of the world, or that Herod under him, a mere tributary king, and he not a Jew, should reign in Jerusalem; nor that this ancient people should have even to pay for the privilege of such a servitude. Time there was, indeed, when the only capitation they knew, was the atonement-money of half a shekel, a ransom for their souls unto Jehovah their King; but now their very heads are not their own, and the tribute must be paid to a foreign human power: yet none of these things sufficiently depict the sunk and degraded condition of Judea; no, it was their procuring cause which constituted the most melancholy feature of the nation's character.

Had they maintained allegiance firm and sure,  
 And kept the faith immaculate and pure,  
 Then the proud eagles of all-conquering Rome  
 Had found one city not to be o'ercome;  
 And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd  
 Had bid defiance to the warring world.

Against the corruption of divine truth, therefore, we see the energies of John and the ministry of Jesus first directed. A direct repeal of the law of God, by the

authority of the professed teachers of religion, was sufficient to account for all the misery which they then endured; and it is worthy of notice, that when the Saviour meant to substantiate this charge, he did so by a reference nearly akin to the subject before us: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honor not his father and his mother, he shall be free;" or, as Tyndal translates, "But ye say every man shall say to his father or mother, that which thou desirest of me to help thee with is given to God; and so shall he not honor his father or mother." Such traditions may seem to us scarcely credible, but by this period, among the Jews, they had become numerous. As a specimen, take the following: "A man may be so bound by vows, that he cannot, without great sin, do what God had by his law required to be done; so that, if he made a vow, which laid him under a necessity to violate God's law that he might observe it, his vow must stand, and the law be abrogated."\*

Before, however, visiting this nation, at any period, and when judgment began to mend her pace, it had been the custom of the Lord to raise up a monitor; and so he did now. Elias must first come, and restore all things, as far as faithful teaching and solemn warning could do so. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers unto the children, and the heart of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse."

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\* Jewish canon, from Pocock.

## SECTION SECOND.

### THE FAMILY CONSTITUTION.

Its Singular Character—its Civil Character—its Sacred Character ;  
—the Head of this domestic economy.

WHATEVER opinion may be formed of the preceding observations, the *singular and invaluable constitution* of a family gives peculiar force and propriety to the prophetic terms already noticed, as well as to many other passages of Sacred Writ. By constitution, I intend the connection of its several parts, and the principles by which each of these is to be governed. There is one society or constitution of things in this world, and only one, which is purely *sacred*; there are others which are purely *civil*. Among the latter there is considerable variety; but amidst the various modifications which earthly governments have assumed, from the purest democracy up to monarchy the most despotic, there is not one form which resembles, or which *can* resemble the constitution of a family. We read, it is granted, of times called patriarchal; but no body of men can ever follow out the principles which rise out of the singular constitution of a family. Below the heavens, on this side of the grave, there is nothing precisely like it. This is more deserving of notice, since it is a remark which



will hold true in every age and in every country. The economy of nations, whether civilized or savage, and the foolish interferences of an injudicious political economy, may derange that of the family, or disregard it, when struggling after a better state of things; but the constitution of a family is in fact the same from the first Adam; the same in any state of society, and in every quarter of the globe.

I have said, therefore, the *singular* constitution of a family gives peculiar force to these words of Malachi. That constitution resembles entirely neither the world nor the church; neither the civil nor the sacred character; since, in fact, it partakes of both: yes, of both; and it is actually the only constitution upon earth, now in existence, of divine establishment, of which this can be affirmed.

The civil character will not be disputed, since it is generally admitted, that families were evidently formed for this world, and its best interests. Reference to either ancient or modern times will prove, that the state has ever stamped a high value on the rights and duties of parents and children: "The common law itself, which is the best bound of our wisdom, doth even, *in hoc individuo*, prefer the prerogative of the father before the prerogative of the king; for, if lands descend, held in chief from an ancestor, on the part of a mother, to a man's eldest son, the father being alive, the father shall have custody of the body, and not the king. It is true that this is only for the father, and not any other parent or ancestor; but then if you look to the high law of tutelage and protection, and of obedience and duty, which is the relative thereto, it is not said, 'Honor thy father alone,' but 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' &c."\*

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\* Bacon.

Now, in addition to the civil or natural, with regard to the sacred character of the domestic constitution, I may inquire, Is a family formed with a view to the present world only? or, Is it even formed for this world chiefly? Certainly not. In its very frame may be seen evidence of the contrary. By God himself it has been framed for a particular end; and what is that end, if it is not a religious one? "If the most fundamental relation in a family, the conjugal relation, was appointed by God for such an end, then certainly the family must be, in the design of its constitution, set up for that end. 'Did not He make one?' says this same prophet, 'Did not He make one? yet had he the residue of the spirit; and wherefore one? that he might seek a godly seed.' He did not design the original constitution of that fundamental relation, only that there might be a continual descent of human nature, but that *religion* might still be transmitted from age to age; and this design he never quits."\* So, in perfect conformity with this design, long before the time of Moses, we read of *family* sacrifices. Jacob, in the line of the promise made to Abraham, and Job, who was not, equally offered burnt-offerings for themselves and their families. Job offered according to the number of his children, and thus he did *continually*. Now, the office of priest, in such a case, must have depended on institution; and these individuals had their warrant in the *nature* of the constitution of which they were the heads. If every society, in which men coalesce according to the mind of God, is bound to own its dependence on him by worship, or service common to all, assuredly this is the case with regard to a family or household, since it is not only the well-spring of every other, or of all society, but a well-spring of God's own institution.

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\* Howe.

For another world, therefore, yes, for the eternal world, and with a view to it principally, does the Almighty set the solitary in families. Every family has in fact a sacred character belonging to it, which may indeed be forgotten or disdained; but the family *is* constituted, and ought therefore to be conducted, with the prospect of the rising generation following that which precedes it, not only to the grave, but into eternity.

This fine constitution of things, which is founded in nature, and exists, therefore, in every family, is only visible, it is true, in all its beauty, when both parents are Christians; because the mixed character of the family constitution attaches itself peculiarly to the person of its head. There are two terms employed in Scripture to describe the present character and daily obligations of the Christian, which apply with peculiar force to the Christian parent or head of a family; one borrowed from what is *civil*, and the other from what is *sacred*. These are king and priest, and to these that of a prophet might be added; but I notice at present only the two former. By his Saviour, even in this life, the Christian is made a king and a priest unto God. These high favors, once bestowed, are to be carried about with him as robes of office and obligation which he cannot lay aside. Now, in the family-circle, there is provided, by God, one of the most interesting and important fields for the exercise and display of both characters. There he may, and there he does reign as a king, in sovereign and undisputed authority; and there, too, as a priest, is he to officiate on behalf of others as well as himself. By the exercise of the former character, his veneration for God is advanced, while he remembers, that, as a 'king unto God,' an account must be rendered of the daily exercise of his authority: by his priestly character, compassion and sympathy are greatly promoted; since it is impossible for a man to pray

often for his family, without feeling increasing tenderness for it.

This beautiful and affecting arrangement of our Creator,—the civil and sacred character, united at once in the very constitution of a family, and in the person of its head, gives rise to some of the most important coincidences with which we are acquainted. Here is a constitution favorable to the state, in the very highest degree, and whatever may be its form of government. In such a family it is that the child, as a child, learns to be a good subject, and that the brother or sister, as such, learns to be a good citizen; and here is a state of things equally favorable to the increase of the church, as it is to that of the state: for if this is not understood, the highest end of its existence is not understood. Here, in short, both the church and the world *meet*, and it is the only spot on earth where it is at once lawful and incumbent on them so to do. You will not fail, however, to observe, that this meeting is upon a very small scale, and under very peculiar circumstances. It is not that the constitution of the church is to be confounded with that of the family. Since God himself does not govern the church as he does the family, so neither must we confound them. Not that these two constitutions, in themselves considered, are in any one point at variance with each other: so far from this, for particular ends, they are in perfect harmony; but still they are so distinct, that neither can be fully understood, much less seen in all its beauty, if confounded with the other. The peculiar genius of their several constitutions can never be violated with impunity. Here, however, in the family, members of the church and of the world must actually meet; and doing so by divine appointment, how peculiar and important is the situation of a parent? Both worlds meeting, both must be kept in view; but no Christian will for a moment hesitate as to *which* world should have the pre-eminence.

Such, at least in part, seems to be the peculiar character of the little group assembled round the household fire. The family may increase ; the establishment extend ; but beyond the limits of a household properly so called, the constitution, as to its main design, cannot extend. Yet, however small in point of number, or unpretending in point of aspect, its connections and laws, its spirit and principles, being altogether *sui generis*, well deserve, and will richly reward the most careful examination.

### SECTION THIRD.

#### CONNECTIONS SUBSISTING BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF THE DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION.

Connections peculiar to this constitution—Husband and Wife—Parent and Child—Brothers and Sisters—Master and Servant—Superior and inferior Servant—Servant and Child.

IN many passages of Sacred Writ, there will be seen much of force and beauty, when the connections subsisting between the several parts of this constitution are fully considered.

**HUSBAND AND WIFE.**—The connection between husband and wife, being at once the ground of all other domestic ties, and in many respects their pattern, naturally claims the first attention. Indeed, not only the connection itself, but the rule laid down in Scripture, to the Christian, for its formation, equally demand notice.

A constitution so singular as that of a Family, is thus found to rise out of a connection quite in character in point of singularity, while the harmony of the whole superstructure rests, of necessity, upon it. To refer, therefore, again to a passage of Scripture, already noticed in a former section, "Have ye not read," said Jesus, "that he which made them (*i. e.* man and wife) at the

beginning, made them (a) male and (a) female?" as intending to prevent both polygamy and divorce; "and said," at least by Moses, if not by Adam himself, divinely instructed into the ends and obligation of marriage in all ages; "for this cause," or on account of engaging in the married state, "shall a man leave his father and mother," the nearest relation he has hitherto sustained, "and cleave to his wife," a more intimate relation still, "and they twain shall be one flesh." "Wherefore they are *no more* twain, but one flesh." A stronger expression it was not possible to employ. As though it had been said, nothing should separate, but that which separates the soul from the body, and even the component parts of the body from each other. "What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

For the nature and intimacy of this connection, therefore, our Lord refers to the original design of the Creator himself, just as Malachi had done before him. Indeed it is not unworthy of remark, that, as introductory to that glorious dispensation, when Elias was to come and *restore* all things, in preparation for his Lord, who was to confirm and establish them, the last of the prophets abounds with reference to first principles. To the honor due to a father—the honor due to a master—respect to a civil governor—to man's common descent from Adam; nay to his original creation by God, he appeals. So in the passage referred to, as quoted both by the Saviour, and the prophet whose authority he thus sanctioned, the reasoning goes back, not to Moses merely, or to any peculiarity in the Mosaic economy; not to Abraham or the covenant made with him, but to the creation of man at the beginning. It points directly at the special *design* of the Creator himself, in the formation of the first pair, and explains the intimacy of the connection which God had formed, with a view to the best interests of the

human family. Yes, the formation of the first woman, not out of the dust of the ground, but out of the first man, was evidently intended to impress on our minds the necessity for this union being entire, and that in order to the end he had in view. "Did not he make one?" says Malachi, "yet had he the residue" or abundance "of the Spirit. And *wherefore* one? that he might seek" and so secure "a godly seed." Does not the prophet here remind the Jew of the first institution of marriage, precisely as the Messiah himself did afterwards? "He tells them that God made but one man at first, the word rendered *one* being masculine; and made the woman out of him, when he could have created another out of the ground, or more if he had pleased—thus instructing them that this was the true pattern of marriage, ordained for true and undivided affections, as best serving the end he had in view, namely, the religious education of children."\* And why was this? Was it that his life-giving power was exhausted in Adam? certainly not. With him was there abundance of power, and the residue of the Spirit; "but as he meant that a godly posterity should be trained up, this would best be done," and could only in general be done, "by the joint care of both parents living together in love, and uniting their instructions, and example, and prayers, for that end."†

A connection, however, so intimate and endearing, must have been intended, in the first instance also, to produce corresponding good to the parties themselves. So it has been said, that "though single life may make a man like an angel, marriage, in very many things, makes the Christian pair like Christ." The latter, indeed, seems to be one intention of the Almighty, according to an interesting passage in the New Testament Scriptures.

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\* Lowth.

† Scott.



It is manifest from it, that marriage is symbolical of one of the greatest mysteries in our religion; and, therefore, *that* of which it is symbolical, is employed by the inspired writer at once to illustrate and enforce the relative obligations of both wife and husband. Read over the entire passage in Ephesians v. 22—33. Thus we know that the Saviour descended from the bosom of his Father, and, contracting with our nature, we became a church; not only the bride, but the spouse, as indissolubly united to him. This church he purifies by his blood, giving the Spirit as an earnest of perfect conformity to his image, and heaven at last, as an inheritance in which to enjoy and display this conformity to himself. Meanwhile this spouse he fosters and cherishes; lodges near to himself—providing for all necessities—relieving all sorrows—resolving all difficulties, and guiding her through life; or, in one word, he has condescended to become at once the husband and the head of his church. In this profoundly mysterious case, the indissoluble union consists in his boundless love and her entire obedience, as well as the interchange and interweaving of interests, common to both: He taking upon him our nature, our condition, our interest, and we in return participating in his. Great then as this mystery is affirmed to be, marriage is employed by Paul to symbolize it: so that it is not only divine in its institution; not only sacred in its union, and honorable in its appellation, but symbolical in its signification, and religious in its end. You observe, however, that the inspired writer having closed his allusion, immediately adds, “Nevertheless,” *i. e.* though the former discourse was intended *casually* to explicate the conjunction of Christ and his church, yet it hath in it this distinct and substantial duty, “let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

In perfect conformity with these sentiments, is the rule laid down in Scripture to the Christian for the formation of this union. Although the fear of God in every age must have been a sufficient guide, it was far too important a subject to be overlooked by the Saviour of our race, in his design to establish a kingdom of righteousness and peace in this unprincipled and rebellious world. In the earliest ages, he well knew, that consequences the most dreadful had ensued from indifference to this subject. Accordingly no sooner do we read of the sons of God taking to themselves partners in life, "of all which they chose," that is, without any regard to their principles in so doing, than it is immediately added, "Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Yes, their disregard to principle in this important step, hurried on the wickedness of the antediluvian world, till the earth became so corrupt before God, that the end of all flesh came before him. The same disregard to principle in this matter, the Saviour also knew, had well nigh prevented the restoration of the Jewish economy after the captivity, and rendered it, even at last, a task of the most formidable and appalling description to Ezra and his friends. Almost despairing of success, even after all his unwearied labors, when he heard of this dereliction of principle, he rent his garment and his mantle, nay, even plucked off the very hair of his head and of his beard, and sat down in an astonishment of grief.

Our blessed Lord, therefore, at once, by the *character* of his subjects, and the *nature* of his kingdom, made provision against such an evil. In its progress over the world, whether Jewish or heathen, it might indeed lay hold of but one party, a husband, or a wife, already united; and though he enjoined the union in this case to remain, giving prospect, too, of the conversion of the other party; yet the union, once dissolved by

death, whatever liberty was enjoyed, must be subject to one condition. In the case supposed in Scripture, it happens to be the female to whom allusion is made, but the law is one. "She is at liberty to be married to whom she will, *only in the Lord.*" For a literal precept, on the part of our Lord, there had been no necessity whatever, the nature and genius of his own kingdom being regarded; and the *incidental* manner in which this injunction occurs, is, to the intelligent reader of Scripture, the strongest confirmation of the rule in all cases where marriage is in prospect, and when there has been no engagement previous to conversion. The inspired writer is manifestly recognizing, *by the way*, a general rule—the universal moral obligation of the Christian.

Should any reader startle at this exposition, not to say object to it, I can only now say, that, in such a case, the disposition to appreciate, and the spirit to imbibe, the intimations of the divine record, will be found, on reflection, at a low ebb indeed, if not altogether wanting. Such a reader has yet to learn and to study the nature and the genius of the Messiah's kingdom. No, the Saviour, without doubt or controversy, evidently intended, in every age, to lay hold of this his own institution, not only preserving it in its original purity, but employing it as one powerful auxiliary to his kingdom; and disregard to him in this one matter alone, by any community, must ever work the ruin of vital Christianity there.

Thus, upon entering on one of the most important relations common to man, and in taking a step which is by far the most important in regard to this life, it is certainly not a little remarkable, that divine revelation should suggest to both parties the absolute necessity of personal religion. For never let it be forgotten, that, if the Christian is bound in this step by one indispensable requisite,

it is not less the duty of every one, whether husband or wife, to *be* a Christian. This, however, is a subject which will naturally present itself for our consideration in another place.

PARENT AND CHILD.—A connection is here admitted at once by many, if not by all; but the nature of it is evidently overlooked by multitudes, misunderstood or denied by others, while by many professing Christians, in every denomination, it has been woefully because practically disregarded. Between the parent and his children a *natural* connection cannot be denied, since it is common to man with the animal creation; and as he rises in value so far above mere animal nature, the natural connection between him and his offspring involves much more of obligation. Yet the sense of obligation goes with multitudes so little way, that Scripture and reason send them for lessons of reproof and warning even to the beasts of the field and the fowls of heaven. This obligation arising from natural connection, were human nature not corrupted and fallen, would go a prodigious length, but, as it is, alas, with most, it ends in furnishing certain instructions for the mind, fitting it merely for the business of this transitory and uncertain life; and if to these instructions be added a portion, great or small, of temporal good, for the sustenance or gratification of the animal frame, the duty of the generation going away has been, in the estimation of many, well discharged.

But if, over and above the natural connection admitted by many as existing between the two generations, there is yet another of far superior importance revealed in Scripture, what shall we say? If there is an *instituted* connection, as well as a natural one, and a connection of God's own institution revealed by himself for our government and encouragement, should it not be patiently

studied? Once understood and regulated by it, the primæval curse will, in a great degree, be softened into mercy.

Until, however, the very basis, or first principle on which this serious and instituted connection depends, be made manifest, it cannot be thoroughly comprehended. The reader, therefore, must not be startled at the two tables of the law of God being placed before him. Yes, that basis of all the order and harmony in the universe, the Moral Law, "to which all things in heaven and earth do homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power," must direct us here.

This law is generally divided into two tables; and these have been summed up, by the Lawgiver himself, as requiring the love of God by the first, and the love of man by the second. In both tables it will be seen, that parents are *especially* regarded. Near the top of the first, no sooner is the divine unity announced, than the honor and glory of God are placed in the most solemn manner under their guardianship; and at the very top of the second, stand the father and mother by name. The first object is to secure for the Almighty the sole and exclusive veneration and worship of *all* his intelligent creatures, and in order to this, he addresses himself to the root or head of every family. Clothing the parent with high authority, as he intended to do in the second table, the Almighty first informs him, that *his* highest aim must consist in maintaining the honor of God in his family, and for this end, these remarkable words are employed, "for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, *visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.*"

To this distinct and solemn intimation, great objections have been expressed ; great and general indifference has been evinced, and even some men of no inferior powers have gone so far as to suppose, that such proceeding, on God's part, actually ceased with the Old Testament dispensation, and, that, when the gospel was published, and everlasting punishment was still more clearly threatened to persevering sinners, the former mode of punishment was left off!

If, however, the Almighty here unfolds his own universal law, and if he has continued in all ages to act accordingly, what will the opinions of men avail? "There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord: he is of one mind, and none can turn him." Let the language only be again observed. The whole is said to originate in the *jealousy* of God. Now, had this jealousy no existence until these words were uttered, or was it confined, in all its merciful severity, to the people to whom it was addressed, to the natural posterity of Abraham, the friend of God? or can we suppose the Almighty to be *less* jealous of his name and honor now, than once? Is it not rather implied, that this was his own universal rule, originating in his own character, as applicable to the constitution of human nature in the domestic circle, coeval with sin itself, and applied, as it had been, to the family of Adam, the father of mankind? and that, from this malediction, even Israel could only be exempted, by conscientiously observing the commandment? "That on which right and wrong depend," even a heathen sage has told us, "that on which right and wrong depend, did not begin to be law when it was written; it is older than the ages of nations and cities, and contemporary with the eternity of God."\*

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\* Cicero.

Besides, the law which Moses received in writing on Sinai, was not less the law of other nations and times, though given to Moses for Israel. The whole economy of which he was the legislator, notwithstanding its minor peculiarities, was but another gracious interposition of God, to preserve entire the knowledge of himself and his will, in a world from which man would, if possible, have excluded both.

When, therefore, Jehovah said, "for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children," he intimated at once what He had been, what He was, and would be in all successive generations. As for the ages past, was it a new thing in the earth for him to act in the spirit and letter of these words? Who, then, were these people to whom this law was proclaimed, and where were they going? Were they not the posterity of Shem, now on their way to, punish the posterity of Ham? A question which at once carries us back to the infancy of a second world, immediately after the deluge, and turns the mysterious journey of Moses and his brethren into a commentary on these very words. When Noah knew what his younger son Ham had done unto him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan (the son of Ham); a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." Now, does not this descending curse of the Almighty, pronounced by Noah, as a prophet, on his own posterity, stand in perfect conformity with this, the law given on Sinai? and from the deluge until now, had not Jehovah, as a jealous God, watched over its accomplishment? Surely this conspicuous prophecy, and its fulfilment reaching through so many generations, may suffice instead of many illustrations. Several questions, however, I am aware, rise out of the brief narrative in Genesis. Why should Noah take occasion to denounce

the conduct of his son, with such solemn severity, and and that too in the person of his grandchild, the first-born of Ham? Had Canaan, as it has been conjectured, first given occasion to his father's irreverence and impiety? So it should seem from the terms employed—"Ham, the *father of Canaan*:" but, at all events, Ham is represented as having sinned, and to such extent as to deserve this awful threatening. Tinctured, it should seem, with the maxims of Cain and his posterity, and supposing, it may be, that the promise of the Messiah was either frustrated in the death of Abel, or altogether false, he made his father the subject of his mockery.

Now, who was this man Noah? In Scripture, no extenuation of his guilt in being overcome by wine is to be found; and he lived long after this to read his own sin in the punishment which he was now inspired to pronounce: but did not Ham know the meaning of the very name given to his father by Lamech? "He called his name Noah (consolation), saying this same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." Noah, too, had done honor to his name; was a just man, and had so walked with God, that He had said, "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." For more than a century did his son know him to have been a preacher of righteousness; and, moved by fear, he had seen him preparing the ark for the salvation of his household. His father's piety had ensured to him a secure abode, and he had thus outlived a storm in which the world was engulfed. After this, too, it should be remembered that Jehovah had spoken to "Noah, and to his sons *with him*, saying, And I, behold I establish my covenant with you, and your seed after you."

When, therefore, Ham, who had been so singularly saved from a deluge which had swept away every father



except his own ; when he, though one of only eight souls, and these the members of one family ; when he, who had so escaped, in consequence of the faith and pious fear of his own parent, presumed to mock, not the virtue, but the sin of this, his father ; for his combined impiety and filial disobedience, the displeasure of God is pronounced over him and his posterity, by the lips, too, of this very parent.\*

No doubt different interpretations of the cause of this curse, from the lips of Noah, may be assigned ; but a cause there was, and descend it did, in solemn illustration of this serious and instituted connection between parent and child, so that both Ham and his posterity were involved in this lowering prophecy. Accordingly, long afterwards, many of them perished miserably in Sodom and Gomorrah, for crimes which seem to have also originated in the neglect of family-government. Nay, about eight hundred and fifty, or, according to Hales, above fifteen hundred years after Noah's prophetic denunciation, Egypt, which was "the land of Ham," suffered awfully in the Exodus, while Shem's posterity are now on the way from Egypt, commissioned to expel the posterity of Canaan. The remnant who survive and remain, are to be "servants to their brethren ;" and so were employed in servile work by Solomon and his successors.

On the other hand, an illustration equally striking of the blessing now announced in the decalogue, is furnished by a reference to Shem and his posterity.

Shem had acted differently, and he is blessed indeed. Noah, too, shall live long enough to see his prophecy of blessing also fulfilled, though he died before Abraham was born. As for Shem, on whom the blessing was pronounced, he shall live to enjoy it ; and so the gradual

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\* For the cause why a curse so severe was pronounced on Ham and his posterity, see the Reflections of Allix, Part I. Chap. 13.

*abbreviation* of human existence, from Noah to Abraham, was rendered subservient to the most gracious of ends. Thus, when Isaac, the child of promise, was married, Shem was yet alive, and in him he saw his posterity of the tenth generation; even in Abraham the ninth, and Isaac the tenth, in lineal descent, he might see his posterity receiving the promise of the future Saviour with faith and joy; Abraham being above 140, and Isaac more than 40 years of age before he expired! Nor did Shem alone survive; Arphaxad, his son, as well as Reu of the fifth generation, Serug of the sixth, and Terah of the eighth, were all alive in the time of Abraham; nay, two other descendants, Salah and Eber, were living as well as Shem, in the days of Isaac; and the last of these, Eber, the great grandson of Shem, though born 2281 B. C., having reached the age of 464, survived the death of Abraham several years. Never was there such a family-group capable of being assembled as this; and although separated from each other, in consequence of Abraham's removal to Canaan, with each other's existence, and prospects, and blessings, they must have been acquainted. The journey of Eleazar of Damascus into Mesopotamia, to procure Rebekah for Isaac, would convert all mere report and conjecture into certainty.

Thus, if Adam himself survived to be both tried in the death of Abel, and blessed in the piety of Seth and Enos; so Noah, at the beginning of a new world, continued to live and pass through the same course. Long too as the period may seem, from the creation to the time of Moses, all difficulty as to the mind of God, on any subject, being distinctly known, and certainly handed down, will vanish at once, when the ages of the antediluvians, and the gradual abbreviation of human existence, from Noah to Moses, are observed. Yes, although the world had gone on for above two thousand five hundred years before this

law thus promulgated from Sinai, it should be remembered that all the patriarchs before Noah, were born before Adam died, and the chain of communication even from Adam to Moses, will be found to have contained little more than four links! From Adam to Noah there was but one man, Methuselah, who joined hands with both; from Noah to Abraham there was only this one individual, Shem, who, for 450 years, was familiar with Noah, and lived till Abraham was nearly 150 years old; from Abraham to Joseph there was only one individual, Isaac; and from Joseph, a fourth individual, viz. Amram, the father of Moses, who must have long and frequently seen Joseph.

All these calculations are made, it is granted, according to the chronology noted on the margin of the Bible, which as yet is most generally followed; but should the reader have consulted the able and interesting chronology of Hales, and feel partial to it; then, extended though the period seem, he will find, that still there was from Adam even to Noah only one individual, viz. Mahalaleel. Indeed, though the whole period, from Adam to Moses, be thus extended to above 3700 years, still the chain of communication does not embrace above six, or, at most, seven individuals.

In addition to what has been said, I notice one peculiarity of these times, which must have had a most powerful influence in perpetuating the knowledge of divine truth. When these aged men lay on their death-bed, it seems to have been their custom to record, in the ear of their posterity now standing round, the most important and fundamental principles of their faith; a practice which must have been attended to with the greater solemnity by their children, from the circumstance that, occasionally at least, as if to guild their dying hour, the aged parent was indulged with some peculiar man-

ifestation of the divine favor, in the way of prophecy, and, in some cases, of prophecy involving at once the future fortunes of his posterity, and the progress of the divine economy relating to the Messiah. Indeed all the prophecies respecting Him, from Adam to Moses, are of a domestic character, and were either given to parents, with some reference to posterity, or, as in the remarkable case of Jacob, uttered by a parent at the close of life, with reference to each of his children.

After all, it would not be doing justice to the subject before us, and the ages before the time of Moses, were I not to go out of this line altogether, and call an independent witness, as well as the most ancient, to whom we can refer. He and his friends will show, that though the corruption of idolatry might have infected the progenitors of Abraham, the Gentile world, if I may so call it, even then exhibited, not only ample knowledge of the true God, but such a sense of parental obligation, as may serve for a pattern to any age. I refer to Job, an Idumean, the faithful witness, in his day, not only to the creation of the world by one supreme Being—the government of the world by the power of God—the corruption of human nature—the necessity of sacrifices to propitiate—the hope of the Messiah, and the certainty of a future resurrection,—but to the *peculiar obligations of a parent*. Yes, the contents of the Book of Job, the most ancient piece of authentic writing upon record, are strongly corroborative of this subject, as well as of the evils descending on those who neglect such obligations.

The long controversy which took place between that illustrious man and his three friends, is remarkable on many accounts. Although not sustained in its masculine vein of thought, by any assistance which might have been derived, from reference to such stupendous proofs of divine judgment as the destruction of Sodom or of Egypt,

which had not yet taken place; nor to such important subsequent events as the Exodus or the giving of the law; and although the friends of Job erred in judgment, and were reprov'd; yet the whole controversy is strikingly illustrative of their knowledge of God and his ways, both in kind and degree. On the particular subject also to which I now advert, however they might disagree respecting the case before them, both Job and his friends were here, as well as in their general views, in perfect harmony. "I have seen the foolish taking root," said Eliphaz; "but suddenly I cursed his habitation. His *children* are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate; neither is there any to deliver them." "How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?" replies Job, "and how oft cometh their destruction upon them! God distributeth sorrows in his anger. They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away. God layeth up his iniquity (that is, the punishment of his iniquity), for his *children*; he rewardeth him, and he shall know it. His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty; for what pleasure hath he in his *house* after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?"

Confessedly mysterious as were the sufferings of Job, with principles such as these we shall find his practice in perfect harmony. He had seven sons and three daughters, all grown up; and of the manner in which they had been trained and instructed by him, any one may judge, by what is recorded of him, when they arrived at the years of maturity. Each of these sons had a house and table of his own, to which, at least on their birth-day, these three sisters were usually invited. Here there was nothing wrong, but, on the contrary, a fine exhibition of family harmony and love. Now, the previous care and watchfulness, the established authority and piety of Job may be conjectured,

from his constant practice, and the as constant compliance of his children, after such family festivity. His authority he had not even now laid aside, nor had he, even when his children were thus far advanced in life, altogether let go the reins. At the same time, like a judicious parent, no anxiety was expressed by him, but upon *one* point—the *possibility* of his children having, in some way, offended God at such seasons.

And his sons were wont to hold a banquet-house,  
 Every one on his birth-day ;  
 When they sent and invited their three sisters  
 To eat and drink together with them.  
 And it came to pass, as the days of such banquets returned,  
 That Job sent for and sanctified them ;  
 And made ready in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings,  
*According to the number of them all :*  
 For, said Job, peradventure my sons  
 May have sinned, nor blessed God in their hearts.—  
 Thus did Job on every such day.\*

The high-toned parental feeling of this passage is manifest. Here we see a father who thought not for himself alone ; who, when he could go no further than a peradventure, waited not, like Eli, till God should send a message to threaten him for the sins of his children. Aware that he might be visited as a parent, in his own person or in theirs, for the sin which he did not redress, and for which he sought not forgiveness and reconciliation, he sent and sanctified his children, and offered up sacrifices “according to the number of them all.” The deep sense of his responsibility to God for the conduct of his children ; their obedience to an authority not even yet resigned ; his tenderness of conscience ; his unremitting care ; and the wisdom of his conjecture, it is

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\* See Good's Translation of Job i. 4, 5, and the Notes ; also Tyndal's Translation. 1549.

impossible not to admire. Surely this parent will be allowed to have acted under the influence of the precise principle laid down in the commandment which we now consider ; yet did this eminent man live long before Moses, and was confessedly altogether out of the usual line of scripture characters.\*

Thus it appears, not only that parental and filial duty had been the common law of man, before the decalogue was given on Sinai, or a single Mosaic statute was in existence ; not only that the connection between parent and child had been well understood from the beginning, and in various recorded instances finely exemplified, but that the very sanction of the second commandment had been applied by the Almighty, and its spirit imbibed by those who feared his name.

To return, however, from a digression perhaps too long, and account for the light which the decalogue now reflected on the domestic constitution : the truth is, that though parental and filial duty had been incumbent from the beginning, the insertion of the second as well as the fifth among the ten commandments, by the finger of God himself, at such a juncture, and in such terms, became necessary for important reasons. For our present purpose, one only is quite sufficient.

The law of all preceding ages, when every Father of a family had been its *priest* as well as its teacher, now demanded notice. It was about to undergo some change, though this was not until that moment when the dispensation began, which was more clearly to prefigure, and ultimately to introduce the Messiah. Parental and filial duty were therefore only made the law of parents and children *formally*, when the priestly office was about to be *transferred and confined* to one particular tribe. The

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\* See the case of Job again referred to under Section Fifth.

ceremonies of divine service might, it seems, be thus transferred and even confined; not so universal and unalienable obligations. Parental moral obligations, with regard to the character and worship of God, remained entire, and though employed as a safeguard against idolatry, they were placed neither upon new nor upon higher ground.\* “Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God, *visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.*”

Such then, by the peculiar style of this law, is the shield held by an Almighty hand over the most helpless and dependent of all created beings, from the moment of

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\* Precisely the same remark will apply to the fourth commandment. A great multiplicity of new external rites were about to be imposed. The Sabbath, ancient as the first week of time, required now to be guarded and sanctioned, lest the laborious and daily occupations of the Mosaic economy should invade the sanctity of that merciful and blessed day. “Amidst the complicated variety of new appointments,” as though it had been said, “forget not the old, the unalterable, the invariably incumbent—*Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore Jehovah blessed the Sabbath-day and (then of course) hallowed it.*” Yes, the reason for this commandment is at once the proof of its antiquity and previous obligation; the Sabbath being originally “*made for man,*” and made for him while yet in the garden of Eden. Hence the division of time into weeks, so repeatedly referred to in Genesis; the matrimonial feast and mourning for the dead, equally of seven days’ duration; hence, too, probably, when Noah sent forth the raven, he tarried seven days; and when the dove, he tarried three times in succession other seven. A like period the Almighty waited, after smiting the Nile and turning it into blood. If, as has been supposed with good reason,



birth, and such the law by which He prepares the Parents for the fulfilment of duties devolving necessarily on them alone. Nor is Nature silent on such an occasion as this. What though man is born the most helpless and dependent of all living? In the first hours of his existence, "when a few indistinct or unmeaning cries are his only language, he exercises an authority irresistible over hearts, of the very existence of which he is ignorant and unconscious;" nor will the infant wait long before he advances in his claims and in his influence. A few weeks only will pass away, when the smile, and the shedding of tears, emotions peculiar to his species, will bind the two parties together, by ties which seem to say, that duties of no common order are involved in this connection.

Let but this voice of Nature unite with that of Revelation, and then the connection between parent and child will be at once understood and felt: a connection, however, which will derive further illustration from the fourth

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the Egyptians prevented the children of Israel from observing the Sabbath; had Pharaoh no reference to this sacred *rest* when he said, "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, *let* the people from their works? Behold the people of the land now are many, and ye make them *rest* from their burdens." But whether he, in these words, referred to the Sabbath and the interference of Moses in its favor, or not, what could Jehovah himself intend, when, before the giving of the law on Sinai, he said to Moses, "How *long* refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath *given* you the Sabbath, (not the law, but the opportunity to observe it, and ye can no longer plead excuse as you might in Egypt,) therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; so the people rested on the seventh day." Had the institution not been observed by their progenitors, how could the nation have possibly understood this remonstrance? And, finally, when the decalogue itself was put into the hand of Moses, how came phraseology so peculiar to be employed with regard to this sacred day, if it was not ancient as the first week of time, obligatory from the period of the creation, and *commemorative* of that mighty work? Hence it was said, "*Remember* the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, *for* in six days," &c.

and fifth Sections, in which the descending penalty and blessing are more fully considered.

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS.**—While society at large has been divided with sufficient propriety into three classes, superiors, inferiors, and equals, it must ever be remembered, by almost every human being, that he never will be able to fulfil the duties imposed upon him by God, except he regard himself as standing between the two extremes; for as any man with ease can fix his eye upon an inferior, so at all times there are many whom he must regard as superior to himself. Now, it is not unworthy of notice, that, as though it were, and most probably is, with a view to all the adventures of future life, this is the precise ground on which every child is placed, by the providence of God, in every family where there are servants as well as parents; and as the children of such families are destined to act a more important part in civil society, so are they, even from infancy, placed in a correspondingly advantageous situation.

When, however, we speak of inferiors and superiors in society at large, a twofold distinction must be kept in view: one consists in what has been styled rank in society, the other consists in moral worth. The former, though far inferior in importance, though of a transitory nature, and soon must pass away, as it is a distinction of God's own creation which he is determined to maintain, it ought to be treated with becoming respect. At the same time, this is not only compatible with a regard to the second distinction, but regard to character as well as rank becomes absolutely necessary to every man, if he would avoid dishonest servility on the one hand, or tyrannical disdain on the other. Here again, therefore, we see the advantageous ground on which the children of such a family are placed, for initiating them into the

duties which must one day devolve upon them. And, oh, what an argument do the children furnish, to both parents and servants, their superiors and inferiors in rank, for enforcing the necessity of moral worth!

The main object, however, of these few remarks, is to induce consideration, not only of the peculiar ground on which children stand, but of the connection which subsists between brothers and sisters, or between the children though of one sex. If the connection of children with parents is intended to produce submission and respect for their superiors; their connection with a servant, courtesy and good-will; so their connection with each other is manifestly intended to initiate them into the sacred and equal duties of friendship. Now, if friendship in general be indeed the cement of the soul, the sweetener of life, the solder of society; "and if it be delightful to enjoy the continued friendship of those who are endeared to us by the intimacy of many years, who can discourse with us of the adventures and studies of youth, or of the years when we first ranked ourselves with men in the free society of the world; how delightful must be the friendship of those who, accompanying us through all this long period, with a closer union than any casual friend, can go still farther back, from the school to the very nursery, which witnessed our common pastimes; who have had an interest in every event that has related to us, and in every person to whom we have been attached; who have honored with us those to whom we have paid every filial honor in life, and wept with us over those whose death has been to us the most lasting sorrow of our heart! Such, in its wide unbroken sympathy, is the friendship of brothers, or of brothers and sisters—considered even as friendship only. But how many circumstances of additional interest does this union receive, from the common relationship to those who have original claims to our still higher regard, and to whom we

offer such an acceptable service, in extending our affections to those whom they love?"

"In treating of the circumstances that tend peculiarly to strengthen this tie, an ancient classical writer extends his view even to the common sepulchre which is at last to enclose the entire family! It is indeed a powerful image—a symbol and almost a lesson of unanimity. Every dissension of man with man excites in us a feeling of painful incongruity; but we feel a peculiar incongruity in the discord of those whom one roof has continued to shelter during life, and whose dust is afterwards to be mingled under one common stone!"

The connection, therefore, which we now consider, involves in it "the duties of a cordial intimacy, rendered more sacred by relationship to the parents from whom we have sprung, and to whom we owe common duties, as we have been objects of common cares. By the peculiar attachment of brothers and sisters, and the mutual services thence arising, the world is at last enriched with the reciprocal enjoyments of a regard that has already formed friends, before it could have thought of seeking them. Surrounded by the aged only, or at least by those who are aged in comparison, the child would have learned only to respect and obey; but with the little society of his *equals* around him, he learns that independence and equality of friendship which train him to the affections that are worthy of a free and undaunted spirit, in the liberty and equal society of maturer years."\*

MASTER AND SERVANT.—Of all domestic connections, this, perhaps, is least understood, or, at least, is most neglected. In the two preceding cases, Nature, imperfect and corrupt as she is, has come in with her aid; but

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\* Brown's Lectures on Moral Philosophy.

this is a connection, affecting at the same time the vital interest of a family, which is left by God to conscience and Scripture alone. Should these two be neglected, what wonder if the duty on either side is not fulfilled? Between master and servant, indeed, a civil connection is at once admitted, and by the laws of various nations this is recognized; but though it is admitted to be of moral obligation, with many it extends in no degree to the care of the soul, nor is there imagined by many to be any thing of this nature involved in it. Let the servant only be obedient and courteous, faithful, and, in some degree, interested about the welfare of the family; and let the master, in addition to the regular payment of the stipulated hire, only add a trifle, occasionally, by way of encouragement or reward, and then both parties conceive that they have well fulfilled their mutual obligations. Multitudes, however, of persons professing the Christian religion, go not even so far as this: the poor and miserable light in which they regard this connection being nothing more than that of a covenant for labor, and wages in exchange.

Now, surely that fine and extensive power, which, by the constitution of a family, is deposited in the master's hand, was never lodged there for such a trivial purpose as this. It is granted, that the connection is far inferior to any one of the three already considered. It may also very soon be dissolved, and this very power of dismissal, like the act of transportation or banishment in a state, being left in the master's option, is one striking proof of the divine regard for the best interests of his own institution, the domestic circle; but still the household servant cannot, must not, be regarded as an alien. Though not born in the house, such a domestic has been ingrafted, and is in fact a *branch* of the family. If proof were wanting, let any one look at the injury or the benefit which,

through him or her, the master's interest, or property, or character, nay, or the beloved children, may sustain.

There is one expression in Sacred Writ, which, though only incidentally employed, is powerfully descriptive of the connection which God has instituted between a master or mistress and the household servant. "'The heir," says Paul, "as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be Lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father." But the connection between parent and child, while he is a minor, or even an infant, involves all the responsibility which we have already considered. Surely, then, the converse of this expression must hold true, and illustrate the legitimate or divinely-revealed connection between master and servant, as proceeding to a far greater extent than many imagine. Surely, if the child differeth nothing from a servant, the servant should differ nothing from a child in the substantial part of care,—the care of the soul. The care will differ in degree, but assuredly it must be the same in kind.

I have thought that any master or mistress may be convinced of the nature and extent of this connection, by observing only the *extent* of duty which they expect from a servant. It is true, that your connection began with little more than a covenant for labor, in return for wages; but if once your servants come under the roof, do you not expect them to be trust-worthy, and blame them if they are not? Do you not expect them, or say, only wish them, to act without hypocrisy and dissimulation? to avoid sowing discord, or fomenting jealousy? Do you not expect them to feel some interest in your welfare and reputation, as well as to care, in some degree, for your children?

If you do not entertain any such expectations, then do not by any means blame them, if they should fail in all

these, and some things else. But if you do express your dissatisfaction, then be assured you did expect all this ; and if you do, is there nothing in *correspondence* to be expected by the servant from you ? Certainly there must be, and the connection between you and your household servant is not only mutual, but more serious and extensive than you have hitherto supposed.

Complaints from masters and mistresses, in regard to servants, I am well aware, have been heard in all ages. Some persons occasionally have said, that they were the plague of their lives, or at least the principal interruption of their domestic comfort. Far from exaggeration, this may be precisely true ; but is there not a cause ? Let us for a moment only observe the substance of these complaints. Do these persons engage our ear with complaint, respecting their profanity or lewdness, their indifference to divine truth, or their ignorance of God ? or are they even concerned about these evils ? No, but they dwell at large on their idleness or falsehood, their pilfering, or their want of interest in the family. Now these complaints, when thoroughly examined, will be found, in most cases, to be the most unjust and foolish in the world. Unjust, because a previous and higher obligation is neglected by them ; and foolish, because they are vainly expecting obedience to their commands, without exacting any to those of God. They are actually expecting the effect without its cause, and that their servants should be dutiful to them, and attentive to their interests, though forgetful of God. Of Abraham it was said, in his praise, that he would command, not his children only, but his *household* after him, that *they* should keep the way of the Lord, and so he secured his own authority and interest : but not so the masters or mistresses to whom we have referred. See then the nature of this connection, for see how Nature rises up and seeks her revenge. The neglect of the souls

of such servants is punished by the sloth or dishonesty of these very dependants; and thus, too, the Almighty chastises righteously, the master's or mistress's neglect of *his* assistance, and contempt of *his* honor, by the inevitable consequences; for so, it seems, it not only is, but so it must be. Yes, servants, though unwittingly, will take a speedy revenge, if their masters consider Christianity and the fear of God as forming no part of the obligation between themselves and their domestics. Not only will they perplex, but, it may be, defraud those who have deprived them, by their neglect of family worship and family instruction, of the only principles which can produce a sense of duty. As soon might they hope for the labor of these servants, without allowing them food and wages, as expect integrity and interest in their families, without taking any steps to implant or promote the principles of either.

It has been justly remarked, that "all authority over others is, in fact, a talent with which we are intrusted," for their benefit as well as our own; and so the discharge of our duty to them is only, in other words, securing our own interest as well as theirs. This, however, is especially manifest in the case of servants dwelling under our roof, as members of the same family. There, by how much our care over the souls of our servants contributes to their knowledge of God and themselves, so far have we secured their conscientious regard to our interests, and furnished them with principles which will not only augment the stock of domestic happiness, but certainly contribute towards the divine favor resting on our dwelling, as well as on all that we possess. Thus, then, is the fear of God, in master and servant, found to be at once the only foundation of relative duty, and the only effectual security for the discharge of it.

This connection, in short, once formed between master



and servant, and reciprocal duties implied in it, the duty and the care of a master is no longer optional, any more than a parent's duty to his children, and his care over them. Duty and care are imposed upon us by God, and they rise out of the very relation in which we stand to our servants.

**SUPERIOR AND INFERIOR SERVANT.**—Independently, however, of the connection between master and servant, there is one of no small moment between the servants themselves, which must not be forgotten. In a large family, wherever there are more than two servants, instead of their forming, as with many, a separate and separated community, they should form, though in some sense a distinct, yet an intimate branch of but one family. If they do so, the connection between the servants themselves will not be neglected. This is the more necessary, from the system of tyranny, among servants in a large family, which proceeds occasionally to great excess, unknown to the master. Let not such a man feel surprised, if he is informed, that, without the slightest occasion for it, there dwells under the same roof with himself, one human being, perhaps more, who is degraded into a mere fag, and drags out a miserable existence. The blame is his. Insight is incumbent, and access to him, at certain periods, should be open to all. True, subordination is absolutely necessary to domestic happiness: a general principle of deference from the inferior to the superior, analogous to that among children from the younger to the elder, must exist; but to the superior servant say, "So live with your inferior, as you would wish your superior to live with you." The size of the establishment is here no apology; for the task, far from being insuperable, is, in the end, its own reward, and brings along with it many gratifications. The late King of Great Britain, in his own

family, is said to have been most exemplary in this duty, to the great benefit of his domestic servants. There are, indeed, many men, and even men of war, who have excelled in it. They have compared their army to a *family*, and, acting accordingly, have shown to us the duties incumbent on its master. Witness the behavior of the late Emperor of the French, when proceeding on his fatal expedition into Russia. Napoleon's inspections then were frequent and systematic. "He overlooked not even the youngest soldier; it seemed as if every thing which concerned them was to him a matter of deep interest. He interrogated them. Did their captain take care of them? Had they received their pay? Were they in want of any requisite? He wished to see their knapsack—in short, all particularities which delighted the soldier. They told each one how Napoleon occupied himself with their minutest details, and that they composed his oldest and *real family*. If he happened to meet with convoys of wounded, he stopped them, informed himself of their condition, of their sufferings, of the action in which they had been connected, and never quitted them without consoling them by his words, or making them partakers of his bounty. On his guard, he bestowed particular attention: he himself daily reviewing some part of them, lavishing commendation, and sometimes blame; but the latter seldom fell on any but the *administrators*."\*

What an example! yet what a melancholy misapplication of talents! And the crowning misery is, "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." But let the master of a family proceed on similar principles; instead of leading those under him to ruin, both children and servants may, by him, as an instrument, not only be prepared for enjoying this life, but be conducted to immortality.

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\* Segur.

SERVANTS AND CHILDREN.—By many parents this is a connection which they most of all overlook : it is indeed one to which many have scarcely ever adverted ; whilst others, from a haughty and childish, not to say mean regard to the distinctions of rank, will not condescend to study it. Provided that the children are kept clean and neat ; if the servants also speak kindly to them in their parents' presence, and seem to entertain some degree of affection for them, nothing more is thought of. But of what principles are these servants ? Have you calculated how they will or may act when out of your sight ? Is it not worthy of some reflection, for what *end* persons of an inferior station in society should have been brought home to dwell, of necessity, in such close contact with your children ? You well know, that, through a very slight failure in only one point of administration or government, mischief may be generated, which another day will sap the foundations of the whole fabric. So it certainly may be with a family : while the master is going on from day to day, during the infancy of his children, heedlessly saying, that “business *must* be attended to,” or, “I cannot attend to every little thing.” But surely the connection between servant and child can be of no inferior importance, when consequences so fatal to your future peace and your children's benefit are involved in it. By the unprincipled language, the deceitful or improper conduct of only a single servant, has an immoral pestilence or plague been introduced into many a family ; the effects of which have continued to molest long after the servant was gone, or perhaps dead. And where is the safeguard against such an evil to be found, if it is not in the principles of parents ; in their conscientious proceedings when choosing servants in the first instance, and their superintendence afterwards ? Think not, parents, of the kitchen, the laundry, the parlor, the table, or the manner

only, in all cases—think of the children too; and remember, that, with these servants, or at least some of them, your children must of necessity come frequently in contact.

There was one man of whom you have heard, who, though a King upon the throne, thought not such a subject below his notice. "Mine eyes," said he, "shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall *serve* me: he that worketh deceit shall not dwell *within my house*: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." Were the heads of families to act on similar principles, not only would they secure the blessing of God on their family, but prevent much evil in the church of God. This high end, among others, David had in view; for this was, in fact, one branch of his instrumentality, when resolving to cut off "all wicked doers from the *city of the Lord*." So, in modern times, the character and conduct of unprincipled servants being so treated, would effectually prevent their being received into church-fellowship, or would prove the happy key to their being expelled from it.

To return, however, to the nursery, or rather the domestic roof—observe only, that these servants are, in truth, the first individuals, taken from the great body of civil society, with whom your children are one day to mingle and converse, and their connection with them is the first link of their connection with it. At this safe and early period, under your own eye, and in miniature, you have an opportunity of ascertaining how they are likely to conduct themselves in the wide world afterwards. Here, if your servants are persons of character, is the first little enclosure which will afford you a marked display either of the amiable or corrupt dispositions of your children. Now, for what end, need I ask, are these two parties thus

brought into contact, so far as the children are concerned? Can it be for no valuable end to them and yourself? or is it providential? Certainly it is. It is for you to instruct them how to behave, and how to feel towards these individuals: for so important is the connection formed between them and your servant, that either a proud or tyrannical, a benevolent or gentle spirit, will be formed, by means of the conduct which they are taught to observe towards those with whom, in their earliest years, they thus so far associate. These individuals, chosen by yourself, out of the great family of mankind, have been providentially brought home to your own fireside, to answer, through domestic economy, the most valuable of purposes another day.

Such are the various connections of this all-important constitution; and what is this but the world in miniature, or rather in the bud and blossom of its being? Here it is that every connection of future life is presented before us: here every future affection of the heart, and every future form of duty, are called to their earliest efforts; and these, confessedly, are the most important. Here, in their first elementary school, provided by infinite wisdom, are the actors in all the future affairs of life, whether great or small, who will fill the world with blessings, or with mischief, when our heads lie low in the dust.

## SECTION FOURTH.

### THE PENALTY OR PUNISHMENT OF DISOBEDIENCE OR NEGLECT, DESCENDING TO POSTERITY.

The domestic Constitution framed for this life; in this life the punishment is inflicted—Visitation of the Fathers on the Children explained and illustrated by Examples—This Visitation inevitable—displaying superlative moral beauty, and, however serious in its consequences, yet involving mercy to mankind.

For the understanding of this subject, it may be necessary to remember, that the constitution of families being formed in this world, in this world they are also broken up; yet so compactly built are they, or so "fitly framed together," that, in the divine administration, as such, they are considered in most respects as we consider persons. That which is done by them at one period is visited upon them at another; and as Adam was visited in "the cool of the evening" for what he had done in the heat of the day, so it is here. Men may object to this, though, when all is known, the course is unobjectionable; but though we had not been able to explain it satisfactorily to every humane and upright mind, still such appears to be the divine law in every age. When Israel was in Babylon, this part of the divine procedure was strongly resented: "The fathers," said they, "have

eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge." The punishment of the sins of the nation, from the days of Manasseh, had fallen on that generation, and to this they objected; but when the Almighty changed his voice, as about to change the line of operation, they might soon see how much of mercy to them there had been, in all this, instead of injustice. "As I live, saith Jehovah, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel, Behold all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die!" As though he had said,— "Now I will no more forbear with you as I have done, but will punish both father and son, without any delay. Every man shall now die for his own iniquity; the father shall not die for the iniquity of the son, nor the son for the iniquity of the father. This mode of treatment, intended for the humbling, and correction, and conversion of both parties to myself, shall have an end; and the soul that sinneth, it shall die, and die without delay."

Here the Almighty, absolutely in the way of *judgment*, suspends the operation of his own law,—a proof that its sanction, *in his hands*, far from being chargeable with undue severity, was fraught with mercy to the community as such; for, in regard to all that has been already advanced, as well as what follows, it must be distinctly kept in view, that this is a mode of punishment, or method of procedure, which he does not, nor ever did remit to any *human* tribunal. "I, THE LORD THY GOD, am a jealous God, VISITING the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate ME." The longest period of human existence to which the disobedient or negligent father could look forward, was the fourth generation, and so long would the eye of divine jealousy rest upon him! Thus the Almighty appropriating to himself the execution of his own

law, even the Jewish legislator or king well knew where to stop, and was cautious of encroaching on the prerogative of God. "Amaziah, king of Judah, as soon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, slew his servants, who had slain the king his father. But the children of the murderers he slew not; according to that which was written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, the fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children put to death for the fathers, but every man shall be put to death for his own sin."

The subject before us, however, has been involved in considerable obscurity, owing to the precise term employed by Jehovah, as expressive of his displeasure, not having been carefully observed. What he threatens is "visitation." This is not to be confounded with the term death; much less is it to be confined to this, though it often involves it. In His visitation of parental delinquency, he draws upon an armory which is all his own; or, to change the figure, there is with him a graduated scale of punishment, framed with minute and awful correspondence to the sin of the offending parent. Hence it is that disobedience, or even neglect of duty, is another day visited and displayed, not by the decease only, but by the ignorance or immorality, the extravagance or parsimony, the dispositions or habits of his offspring; and as it so happens that parents in general feel most acutely the manifestation of their own failings in the persons of their children, and as they find *living* trials to be the most severe, this unalterable determination of Heaven proves, in its infallible result, to be a visitation indeed!

The visitation threatened, therefore, though involving tokens of divine displeasure, is to be understood in its commencement at least, not so much with reference to the state after death, as the life which precedes it. At



the head of a family, interested in all the enjoyments and advantages of the present scene, the parent is warned lest he draw down the displeasure of God, and entail a heavy load on those who are most dear to him. But still, if it is true, that, just as the twig is bent the tree is inclined, and that as men live, so in general they die, as powerful instrumental causes, parents are here forewarned, that if they lead not their posterity so far on towards the heavenly Canaan, they may sink them lower than the grave. In short, the heart of a family may be said to reside in the breast of the parent, and to this, therefore, the arrow of divine jealousy is pointed. The responsibility of parents may thus, no doubt, appear to be fearfully great; but still it *is*, as it seems: and if the nature of the human mind forbids it to be more, the peculiar genius of the domestic constitution forbids it to be less.

With these observations we are prepared still farther to illustrate the melancholy and solemn, but profitable subject of the curse descending.

When God inflicts the temporal evil on a son for his father's sin, to the father he acts as a Judge, but to the son as a Lord or Sovereign. With the parent he is angry, and especially punishes him, even in his posterity; his crime being such an inevitable consequence of disregard to a constitution of things, at the head of which the Almighty placed him, that without a perpetual miracle, such consequences must ensue. The eye of his jealousy is fixed on the parent, and follows him night and day, and he it is who is made responsible for all that occurs under his administration. To the son the Almighty acts as a lord. He will to him do right, and before long, or in the end, mysteriously show, how, though the visitation should fall upon even the third or fourth generation, it has been all along a punishment chiefly, and in many cases solely, to the *original* offender.

This may seem at first strange, but it is not less true, and it is capable of the most satisfactory explanation. In many instances, perhaps in the great majority, the awful mode of procedure here threatened, is to the child ultimately a blessing; to the parents only an immediate curse; and to them only, or chiefly, an *evidence* of the divine displeasure against sin. With children who die in infancy this may be the case. Here it is indeed that the survivor dies. With the children it is well. Alas! it is truly "for *us* they sicken, and for us *they* die." But this same thing may happen when the child has arrived even at manhood. So it happened with one of the most amiable of characters mentioned in Scripture—the son of the first Jewish king. To Saul *his* death was an awful evidence of God's displeasure, and of his rejection of him as king; but to Jonathan it was a blessing, since it ended an honorable, and consistent, and prevented an inglorious life. Had he lived he must have proved chiefly a lasting testimony of the divine displeasure on his father, whose family had lost the crown, because of his repeated acts of disobedience to God. If the brothers of Jonathan, who also died that same day, were bad men, each of them died also for his own iniquity; but all combined to point out Saul as the procuring cause. They all died *before* him; he knew it all, and walked several miles distant from the field of battle, before he fell on his sword!

Yes, relative characters are, of all others, the most serious, since they are most pregnant either with good or evil to him who sustains them. Saul was a king, as well as a parent; and the divine jealousy of which he had been so often warned, was not exhausted on the mountains of Gilboa. Five hundred years before Saul lived, to the Gibeonites, who had craftily secured their lives, by exchanging them for their liberty, Joshua had given his *oath*, and thus made Jehovah, on Israel's part, their

surety; but Saul, in the heat of his false zeal and partiality to the men of Israel and Judah, slew many of them. Saul is gone; but in David's time famine begins, and for three years in succession, rages over his whole kingdom. Upon his making humble inquiry as to the cause, God replied: "It is for Saul, and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." What is to be done? To the Gibeonites an appeal must be made. Not less than seven sons of this heedless man are now sought for, and found, and hung up in open day, at Gibeah, before the sun, when it was said, "God was entreated for the land." What a monitory lesson to the reigning king! There can be no doubt, that each of these men had deserved to die for his own iniquity; but the Revealer of secrets, explaining his own revealed plan, directly traces the lightning of his vengeance home to the cloud which burst on the mountains of Gilboa; for it had not then, it seems, discharged all its thunder. David, however, was familiar with judgment and mercy in union, and sung of both; and, as a contrast, it is most consoling, even in this case, to observe the blessing descend as well as the curse. For *Jonathan's* sake, Mephibosheth, his descendant, is spared; and not only so, but is made to sit at table daily as one of the king's sons!

It is not, however, by undue severity, or positive wickedness only, that parents incur the frown of God. Over-indulgence, or criminal easiness of temper in David himself, was most effectually punished by the rebellion and death of Absalom; and in old Eli, by the loss of both his sons, as well as the ruin of his family, in one day!

Such being the actual procedure of the Almighty, does it not now appear, that the terms in which his law is expressed, are to be considered as just so much light thrown upon the path of duty, and the constitution of every family to whom they are delivered; for to whom are these solemn

words addressed especially, if not to parents? Law, however, he well knows, if separated from its sanction, resembles only solemn advice, and, to the corrupted or heedless ear of man, partakes of little inducement. The influence of law on our character and conduct, is, therefore, derived chiefly from the sanction by which it is enforced; and the sanctions of the divine law, in particular, address the conscience of man, through the medium of faith. Should they once be thus regarded, they are found to consist, "not of arbitrary enactments, but of consequences *inevitably* resulting, in the nature of things, from wilful opposition to the perfections of God, and the moral order of the universe.\*

The solemn and affecting visitation here threatened is therefore to be regarded as a warning voice from the Lord of the Universe. Here he informs us, beforehand, of what must inevitably result from disobedience or even neglect; and if any farther proof of this is wanting, I might address myself even to the eye as well as the ear. Look all around you. Daily you behold natural defects and deformity inherited from parents; you see hereditary diseases running down by the chain of successive generations. Such things are generally said to be *inevitable*, and such, it is said, is the *course* of nature. To interfere and prevent this, would not only involve what has been, strangely enough, called a perpetual miracle: it would be for the Creator to counterwork the natural actions of his creatures, and to disturb every moment the harmony of the universe. How, then, can we imagine that he will—nay, that, consistently with his jealousy and this warning, he *can* interfere to counterwork *moral* defects?

The solemn sanction which we now consider has been considered chiefly as inevitable; but in every thing,

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\* Conder.

which by the determination of God is inevitable; in every thing which, in consequence of this, is not to be escaped by all the ingenuity or the craftiness of man, there is to be seen superlative moral beauty: and if the same thing is admired under human administration, in the divine government it demands far higher regard and veneration. In every earthly government it is always regarded as an evidence of good and comely order, as well as equity, that children should inherit the poverty and rags of those parents who were confessedly not only poor but profligate, or who had squandered, or forfeited by their crimes, all they had. But the violation of this first and second commandment amounts to nothing short of treason under the divine government: now, under an earthly government, the traitor is himself condemned to death; his property forfeited to the crown; his escutcheon is reversed; his arms of honor extinguished; and the nobility of his family is lost and forgotten. Such are some of the melancholy consequences of what has been styled—the *taint* of blood. Even among heathen nations such a connection between a parent and his children has been well understood and approved: “When the Athenians saw honor done to the posterity of Cimon, a good citizen, who had been murdered for his wisdom and virtue, they were highly pleased; when, at the same time, they saw a decree of banishment pass against the children of Lacharis and Aristo, they laid their hands upon their mouths, and with silence did admire the justice of the Power above.”

To proceed only one step farther: in every thing divine, where moral beauty is conspicuous, mercy is apparent; so it is here especially, even in the solemn sanction of the second commandment. Language which, at first reading, to a superficial observer, might seem fraught with evil only, will be found, in the event of our taking warning, only big with blessing,—with blessing not only to our-

selves, but to generations yet unborn. Well does our merciful Creator know, that neglects arising from inconsideration, or want of forethought, are often attended with consequences just as serious and fatal as those which follow the greatest crimes. To counteract these sins of neglect, there must be some general law, and God, in great mercy to man, thus reveals it, as one admirably adapted for this end. In man there is a certain fearlessness or indifference with regard to what may be hereafter, or after him, in the moral government of God. It becomes necessary, therefore, that the Author of his being should lay hold of him in the most vulnerable and tender part; thus securing for himself that respect and veneration which is at once our interest and duty, and his right. By making his examples thus lasting and communicative, and of great effect, he arrests the spirits of men, and secures for himself the great object for which he once wrote these words on the top of Mount Sinai:—"For the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven on the tables."

Such being the law and solemn determination of the Most High, you need not be surprised when you see the displeasure of God first hover for a season over the habitation of the ungodly, then enter in and abide there, till He hath destroyed the wealth and the honor, the comfort and the credit of the whole family. Such being his law, you will not long wonder at the roll which the prophet Zechariah saw flying in the air, over the land of Judea: nor can you object to the answer which was given him, when asked, "What seest thou? Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the whole earth; for every one that stealeth shall be cut off on this side, *according to it*; and every one that sweareth shall be cut off on that side, *according to it*. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the house

of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof." Did not this entire consumption of the house indicate that the divine displeasure rested on the family of the sinful parent? while the dishonest and the profane are selected as fit and awful representatives of the violators of both tables of the law.

What! it will be said by some who do not yet fully understand the subject, is there no way of escape—no way by which the entail of the curse may be cut off? Even natural evil, or natural and hereditary disease, may be so far ameliorated, and often eradicated or prevented, by the regimen or temperance of any one link in the chain of generations. Precisely so; and here also is revealed to us the *moral* check to moral disorder or deformity: it is simply by a recurrence to this very statute. So said the Psalmist long after Moses,—“He established a *testimony*\* in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children: that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and *might not be as their fathers*, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their *hearts* aright, and whose *spirit* was not steadfast with God.”

Suppose now, if you will, that parents have even generally neglected their duty in a town—in a city—in a

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\* Such was the title given to the moral law (Exod. xxv. 16.), as to be deposited in the Ark, which was covered by the mercy-seat. There securely kept, it *testified* at once God's authority and his regard; that though merciful, he required obedience; while in case of failure or neglect, it *testified* against every transgressor.

nation,—then to this statute, taken from the moral law itself, must we have immediate recourse, if we desire to arrest the plague, and restore the tone of society. It is for the legate of the skies, and for every judicious Christian, to lay the axe to the root of the tree. It is for them to look to the Parents, all corrupt and abandoned though they be. Their hearts must be turned, and then will these hearts turn to their children. Not that the children are to be forgotten by such; oh, no—in no wise; but let the parents, as to conversion, be regarded, not with a hopeless or unbelieving eye,—let them be *primarily* regarded. Let us not be told of their corrupt, and formed, and confirmed habits, and let no Christian's heart fail him here. We tread in the footsteps of the word of God, and follow the order marked out to us by Heaven. “He shall,”—yes, and John did “turn the heart of the parents to the children, and the heart of the children to their parents.” He did, and we may; nay, we shall, if we have faith in God, when treading in the footsteps of John: otherwise what has become of our blessed Saviour's assurance—“He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he?”



## SECTION FIFTH.

### THE BLESSING CONNECTED WITH OBEDIENCE, DESCENDING TO POSTERITY.

Though this Blessing, revealed in Scripture, and confirmed by experience, seems acceptable to the human heart, no man believes in it, who disregards or rejects the punishment in contrast.—The descending Blessing illustrated by example.

To prove that this moral connection between a parent and his family is of God's own institution, it seems now only necessary to notice the blessing which he has graciously connected with our regard to it. To the blessing descending, men in general profess to feel no objection; and the language in which it is expressed is indeed peculiarly affecting: "I, the Lord thy God—am shewing mercy to thousands," or a thousand generations "of them that love me, and (as the proof of their love) keep my commandments." It is, however, very questionable whether there is not as little faith in the blessing *descending*, as the curse; and it deserves consideration, that he only believes in one, who believes in both; since, in producing conformity to the law, faith in both is absolutely requisite. The curse secures attention and consideration, caution and forethought; the blessing produces pleasure and hope, perseverance and success: the threatening is intended to maintain the fear of God,

and to prevent the entrance of the fear of man, or undue regard to him in the management of one's family ; while the promise is meant to teach parents, that if they really desire to have the blessing of God entailed on their posterity, they must labor chiefly to implant piety. Oh, blessed indeed is that Parent who herein fears God, and herein hopes in his mercy !

Under this head, however, we require carefully to observe, that death, in itself considered, is by no means to be regarded as an unequivocal mark of the divine displeasure. Death, indeed, in all instances, must ever prove a trial, and it is sent as such ; but it does not, it even cannot interrupt the descent of this blessing. Nay, however strange it may seem, death, which generally breaks the chain of connection between most sublunary things, when God becomes his own interpreter, may prove to be a *link* in the chain of the Christian parent's blessings. "All things," sin only excepted, "work together for good ;" or, as Tyndal says, "for the best, to them that love God,—to them who are the called according to his purpose." But, in such a case, is this possible ? says the confounded, or distressed and bereaved Christian parent. I reply, it is not merely possible : it is certain ; because "all things are yours." Death is yours—even death, is, by a peculiar right, and by an emphasis of interest, yours : nay, "whether life or death, things present or things to come : all things are yours ; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." Thus it is, that though such bereavements produce an anguish which painful experience alone can explain, the Christian comes to understand that there is in the house of God "a place and a name, better than of sons and of daughters." Besides even cases, which, to the careless eye, may seem like judgment, and like nothing else, under the emollient hand of time, admit of an explanation, and, to the

afflicted party, of an experience which has not unfrequently constrained them to say with Milton :

This is my favor'd lot,  
My exaltation to afflictions high ;  
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest ;  
I will not argue that, nor will repine.

These remarks I have here preferred, as I am fully aware of at least one instance, recorded prominently in the sacred page, which may seem to militate against the general doctrine of conscientious training being followed with its reward in this life. This instance, however, constitutes a link in by far the most mysterious chain of providential dealing towards a human being of which we read. Still, let it be laid before us, with all its distressing accompaniments. It may turn out to be confirmatory of the blessing of God, resting on a conscientious and consistent parent, and of that blessing descending to his posterity. I refer to Job, and the loss of his ten children in one day !

“The loss of one child has often been more than an affectionate parent could support with decent resignation ; but for a whole family, educated with pious care, and for years insinuating into their father’s affections ; who were all grown up ; living in harmony and in affluence, in health and credit ; who were likely to perpetuate his name and prosperity ;”—for such a family to be all cut off at once—suddenly—when engaged in feasting together, on their eldest brother’s birth-day !—“ this, added to all the preceding unprecedented misfortunes, was sufficient, and more than sufficient, to have driven most men distracted.”\*

And what advantage was it now to Job, that he had done his utmost to secure the divine favor resting on his

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\* Scott.

numerous and affectionate children? Of these seasons of festivity he had not been without some previous apprehension; but still in them he had detected nothing sinful: otherwise the same high authority which could secure the unanimous attendance of his children, at his usual family sacrifice, next morning, could as easily have put an end to such proceedings altogether. But no; his practice then was but a signal proof of his eminent and habitual watchfulness over their best interests; and, by Satan, the day was seized upon with ingenious malignity, only to render the stroke more severe. What advantage, then, did Job derive? What form or shape of blessing rested on his anguished heart, on the evening of that eventful day, after all his care, and all his burnt-sacrifices? Oh! let us only imagine, for one moment, that he had not *so* conducted himself; nay, that he had not done so towards only one single child, whether son or daughter; that he had acted like Eli with Hophni and Phineas, or even like David with Absalom or Adonijah; would he so soon have been able to express himself as he did? Would he so soon have been able to have said, "Blessed be the name of the Lord?" I believe not. Here then is, even now, one form of blessing, and that, far from an inferior one, which rested on the head of this deeply-afflicted parent. And though, afterwards, the still accumulating weight extorted from him some impatient expressions, which many have inconsiderately opposed to the scriptural commendation of his patience: although Job afterwards cried—"O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall *no more see good*; thine eyes are upon me, and *I can live no longer*;" in all this he was mistaken. Good he lived to see, greater than he had ever known: greater good in his own experience—greater in his family—greater in his substance, and in all that concerned him.

The commencement of Jehovah, however, is particu-

larly worthy of observation. In the very depths of the earth, covered with disease, and still bereft of all he once possessed, is Job selected to the high office of a mediator before God. As much as to say, that a good man, when at his lowest, might even then rank high above all around him in divine favor; that though he walk in darkness, without a ray of the sun of providence to beam upon him: so far from this being an index of his actual condition in the sight of God, it might be the reverse. What an answer, then, was Job, in this low condition, to many of the false, though, in other respects, powerful reasoning of his friends? "Offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering," said Jehovah to them, "and my servant Job shall pray for you; for him will I accept (though he has been, and is still despised of men); lest I deal with you after your folly."

Immediately after this marked and singular vindication of his *character*, the imputation of which had been to him the bitterest ingredient in his cup of wo, see the Almighty turning his captivity, or reversing his affliction, by redressing, individually, every grievance. His health is re-established: his high respectability of character more than returns; his relatives and neighbors, who once stood aloof, or shuddered at the sight of him, come bending around him—either afraid of disregarding such a favorite of Heaven, or eager to obtain the benefit of his intercessions and instructions. Instead of being considered the greatest sinner in the land, he is raised, not merely to the authority of a judge among men, as he had been before; he has been elevated to the higher ground of a mediator. To crown the whole, as a testimony that his beloved children were not in the same condition with his other perishable property; that they were "not lost, but gone before;" he has precisely the *same* number of sons, and the *same* of daughters, by the *same* mother! The pro-

perty of Job, in every kind, had been exactly doubled. Now, the same number of children being restored to him in this world, has been supposed to indicate, that, with those who had gone before, *these* were doubled also. But whatever may be thought of this conjecture, there can be no doubt that Job was singularly blest in *both* families. Both were distinguished at once for obedience to him, and affectionate harmony among themselves. The former family has been already noticed; and the latter had so acted as to be ranked with the former among the number of the blessings by which God had distinguished him. His sons, and his sons' sons, even to the fourth generation, dwelt round him; and for each of his daughters he provided an inheritance "among their brethren." For one hundred and forty years also did this extraordinary man survive to enjoy his family comforts; so that, instead of being written childless, or his grey hairs descending with sorrow to the grave, he leaves a numerous posterity, and does not expire till he "is old and full of days," or satisfied with life.

A more eminent instance of the divine blessing resting on a parent and his family, we do not meet with in the whole compass of divine Revelation. And though Eliphaz the Temanite could little imagine that his words would ever literally be verified, in the experience of his deeply-afflicted friend, yet so it was :

And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace;  
 And thou shalt visit thy habitation, and not sin:  
     Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great,  
     And thine offspring as the grass of the earth:  
 Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age,  
 Like as a shock of corn cometh in, in its season.—*Job* v. 24, 25.

Having now "heard of the patience of Job, and seen the end of the Lord," that he is still very pitiful and of

tender mercy : having disposed of this confessedly difficult and mysterious case ; let me remind the reader, that though, in conscientious paternal conduct, when met by filial obedience, there may be a tendency to the prolongation of human existence ; and certainly the opposite characters very often live not out half their days ; still the blessing promised *consists* not in temporal or sublunary good, although this becomes a frequent, if not a general associate. In the blessing of God there is something infinitely superior. It consists in mercy, the vestibule to all spiritual good ; or in righteousness, the summary of all to which mercy alone can introduce. "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting *upon* them that fear him, and his righteousness *unto* children's children ; to such as keep his covenant, and to those who remember his commandments to do them."

In illustration of this blessing descending, I shall, in this section, only refer to the Father of the faithful ; and I the rather select him, because here is a proof that the Almighty had been acting on the same principle, long before it was committed to writing on Sinai. Nor let it be thought that, in selecting Abraham, I point too high. There is nothing recorded respecting this eminent man, so far as my reference goes, which was recorded "for his sake only," but "for us also ;" and with regard to his domestic character, in particular, there is certainly nothing recorded which is inimitable. Even "those who are not of the circumcision" must, if his children, walk in the steps of the patriarch : and it will be found that they actually do so, just in proportion as they prize and indulge the hope of sitting down with him in the heavenly Canaan. "Abraham," said the Lord, "I will bless thee, and *thou shalt be a blessing.*" Full of the divine blessing, it should be his felicity to impart blessing to thousands. Accordingly, all the true blessedness which the wide world is

now enjoying, may be traced up to Abraham and his posterity. "To him and them, under God, are we indebted for the Scriptures—the Saviour—the church,—for his posterity are the stock on which the church is grafted!" The sources of some of our largest rivers are unknown; great enterprise has been shown in tracing them up, while eager curiosity has waited and longed for certain accounts of final success. Let the Christian here observe from whence a mightier current has come, and he will at last arrive at a single tent in the land of Canaan—a single family—a single home. Among its inmates, he is directed to the Father; for of him God had said, "I know Abraham, that he will command his *children and his household* after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that (in order that) the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." What! it may be said, is it after all come to this? Was not the promise of God spontaneously free and absolute? Did he not say, "Abraham, I *will* bless thee, and thou *shalt* be a blessing?" Yes, he did; but still the most absolute promise may, and the most absolute promise *must*, have an appropriate and congruous channel in which to run. Down this channel, therefore, the Almighty sent his choicest favors, widening and deepening its course; and though many of Abraham's posterity acted, alas! unworthy of their first father, yet there ever was a remnant who walked in his footsteps. Jehovah *would* keep his covenant, and preserved his posterity distinct, till out of it came the Messiah, blessing all nations! Nay, what constitutes at this hour his greatest moral miracle, distinct he preserves that posterity still:

Mysterious race! depriv'd of land and laws,  
A general language, and a public cause;



With a religion none can now obey ;  
With a reproach which none can take away :  
A people still, whose common ties are gone ;  
Who, mix'd with every race, are lost in none !

If the cloud which burst over poor King Saul was long of drifting to leeward, and forty years afterwards was still discharging its thunders ; on the other hand, the blessing of which Abraham was full, is, it seems, not even yet exhausted ! Yes ; the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable. Even now, in his conduct towards the Jews, there is more of *design* to be seen than towards any people on the face of the earth. Their *peculiar preservation* is in order to their ultimate calling ; and blessed indeed is the party who shall be employed, under God, as the conductor to break that cloud which has hung over them so long. Break when it may, it will burst in blessings on their head ; nor is there any single event in which the church, nay, the world is so much interested.—“Through our mercy they also shall obtain mercy ; but what shall the recovering of them be, but as life from the dead ?”

Thus, however large the compass which He may fetch in his mysterious judgments, the God of Abraham, ever faithful to his word, will fulfil his promise, *literally*, in all its magnificence.

Under this head I might proceed to almost any length ; but, presuming that the following section will be received as a practical illustration and proof of the same subject, to it I refer the reader, as affording ample evidence of the divine blessing resting on a parent's endeavors.

## SECTION SIXTH.

### THE MORAL POWER PECULIAR TO THE DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION.

This Power a combination of qualities: *First*, The beneficial power of the Parent over the Child, illustrated by reference to Abraham—Isaac—Jacob—Moses—Solomon—and the Parents of the Apostles. *Second*, The Power which the Parent enjoys of forming the Child to greatness of character, or extensive usefulness, illustrated first by reference to Scripture characters, and then to others of modern date; viz. Alfred—Washington—Sir William Jones—Milton—Boerhaave—Linnæus—Pascal—Cowper—Baxter—Hall—Doddrige—Edwards—Dwight—Lady Rachel Russel—Lady Bacon—Mrs. Hutchison—Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe—Mrs. Cecil—Mrs. Dwight—Miss Smith—Miss Bacon, and many others. *Third*, The Power of the domestic Constitution in forming the character of Servants. *Fourth*, The Power of resistance to evil, inherent in the Family Constitution, illustrated by reference to Joshua, and the remarkable history of the Kenites or Rechabites.

To understand this domestic constitution aright, and to feel impressed with a sense of its importance in the economy of nations, it becomes necessary to observe it in actual operation, and in the singular effects of which, under the blessing of God, it has been the cause. The moral power thus conspicuously displayed by it, will, I presume, furnish another most striking proof of its divine origin.

We have already remarked, that it is in a family where

the parents are Christians, and of course are regulated by the oracles of God, that this constitution is seen in all its strength and beauty. Another family, though of the same constitution, resembles an apparatus, in motion indeed, but shattered and deranged; while, in this, we see the same apparatus in order, proceeding harmoniously, and reaching the end intended by its Maker. The moral power to which I allude is not so much the power of numbers, for these are not great; but various modifications of power, which are found scattered elsewhere, yet individually moving and sustaining other bodies, are here *combined*. There is much of power in authority, much in precept and in example, much in union and in sympathy: they are here all united. Here each of these have an appropriate sphere of operation, in which they thrive and grow to the greatest extent; and not only so, but they grow best in harmony with each other, growing and strengthening with each other's growth and strength.

There seem to be, at least, four different points of view in which this power ought to be regarded. These contemplated, first separately, and then in union, will display both its peculiar character and prodigious extent. *First*, The influence or power which the judicious parent acquires over the child, and the beneficial purposes to which this power, in such hands, naturally tends. *Second*, The power which the parent enjoys of forming the child to greatness of character or extensive usefulness. *Third*, The power inherent in the domestic constitution to form, or reform, and improve the character of servants. *Fourth*, The irresistible energy inherent in the constitution itself, as a whole, for preserving religion or morality, and repelling evil or the corruption of manners.

*First*, THE INFLUENCE OR POWER WHICH THE JUDICIOUS PARENT ACQUIRES OVER THE CHILD, AND THE BENEFICIAL PURPOSES TO WHICH THIS POWER, IN SUCH HANDS, NATURALLY TENDS.

Witness the power which Abraham must have acquired over Isaac, when you see him yield to his father on the top of Mount Moriah, for I have no idea that any violence was used. Witness the influence of this son over Jacob, when called upon to discover the object of his highest veneration by solemn oath. Then you hear him swear "by the *Fear* of his *Father* Isaac." See him also on the way to Egypt, yet afraid to go down, and, as soon as he arrives at Beersheba, the border of Canaan, lest he should plant his foot on forbidden ground, see him solemnly recognize his connection with Isaac. There he offers sacrifices to the God of his *Father* Isaac, and the Almighty as strikingly adverts to this. He replied in a vision of the night, "I am God, the God of *thy* *Father*: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up; and Joseph shall put his hand on thine eyes."—Dead or alive, as though the Lord had said, it matters not, for my promise of blessing extends to thee and thine beyond the grave: still "*I* will bring thee up." So Joseph, under God, was the instrument employed—closing his father's eyes in death, and bringing up his body into the land of promise. Witness the influence of Jacob on Joseph. One day, when yet only a lad, Jacob had said to him, "What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I, and thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" Yet Joseph lived to show the old man how all this might be true, and how he could still retain for *him* the highest regard and affection. See him, though "Lord of all Egypt," bowing before his venerable parent, and venerating and cherishing him, bringing even his children to receive their old grandfather's blessing; and see him afterwards, in company with his brethren, and in exact compliance with his father's request, carrying the bones of the patriarch up into Canaan with so much respect.

Witness the influence of his parents on Moses. Here was education too—that powerful engine—standing in the way, and which, so far as it went, must have chained him down to Egypt: but all is as nothing before the influence of his nursing mother and father. The choice of Moses is ascribed, indeed, to faith, for nothing else could account for it; but “faith cometh by hearing;” and in the court of Pharaoh, or from Pharaoh’s daughter, what had he heard, if his parents had not instilled into his mind their own principles?

But I need not here multiply examples, with which the Sacred Scriptures abound; otherwise one might dwell on the influence and power of many parents: the influence of such a mother as Hannah over such a son as Samuel; the influence of the grandmother of Timothy on his mother, and of his mother on him, the man of whom even Paul said afterwards, “I have no man like-minded,” or so dear to me.

**THE APOSTLES.**—There is, however, one illustrious group of examples, which must not be so passed over: they will be seen standing in the closest connection with our blessed Saviour himself, who, in laying the foundation of his own imperishable kingdom, availed himself to such an extent of the power of parental influence and natural attachment. The principle on which he proceeded in the selection of his particular friends and apostles, if it is discoverable, is certainly a subject of great interest and laudable curiosity; it has therefore often afforded matter of speculation. Observe, however, the following facts, and then say whether it does not actually seem as though, by his procedure, he had intended to commend the subject now before us to the most serious attention of Christians individually, and the Christian church in all ages.

Of the twelve men whom he selected for apostles, while

not one of them belonged to Jerusalem, and not one of them, as far as we know, was taken from the tribe of Levi, more than the half were under previous natural connections among themselves. The natural relationship, however, of these apostles to each other, as well as their connection with the parents who gave them birth, like many other subjects, is not apparent at first view, nor does any single passage, in so many words, inform us of either. The sacred penmen pursue their own high purpose or end, while they write so as to invite search; and numerous are the discoveries which result from cautious induction, and a careful comparison of incidental expressions. As far as the Apostles and their Parents are noticed, in a variety of places, the following may be taken as the result:

PARENTS.	CHILDREN.
JONAS and ——— . . . . .	<i>Peter and Andrew.</i>
ZEBEDEE and SALOME, . . . . .	<i>James and John.</i>
CLEOPAS or ALPHEUS } . . . . .	{ <i>James and Jude,*</i>
and MARY, } . . . . .	{ <i>Simon† and Matthew.‡</i>

Cleopas and Mary had indeed yet another son, called *Joses* or *Joseph*; so *Mary* is said, in one place, to be the mother of *James*, and *Joses*, and *Simeon*, and *Judas*; and, as she was also nearly related to the mother of our Lord, these, her children, in the large acceptation of the Jewish phraseology, were called "his brethren," while, by the same passage, it also appears that *Mary* had several daughters.

Thus, of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, eight of them were brothers chosen out of three families; and nothing, by the way, could be more lovely than these brothers going out, two and two, as they afterwards did, by the

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\* Or *Judas*, not *Iscariot*, or *Lebbeus*, or *Thaddeus*.

† Or *Simon Zelotes*, or *Simon the Canaanite*.

‡ Or *Levi* the son of *Alpheus*.

direction of their Saviour. On the eminence of these men I need not dwell, nor on their importance in establishing Christianity. They include the only individuals in the apostleship who wrote any part of the New Testament; nay, five out of the eight are writers in Scripture; ten of its books they are inspired to compose, including two lives of the Saviour himself, seven epistles, and the book of Revelation; one of them opens the door of faith to the nations of the world, and, from attachment to their Master, one is the first, and another the last, who suffered for his sake.

It is however on account of their *Parents*, and in connection with them, that they have been here introduced. Of these parents the brief notices in Scripture are extremely interesting, and, when they are all united, it is presumed the inference will be clear and striking, that to them their children must have been signally indebted.

Of the parents of the two first mentioned, Peter and Andrew, we know least. Of their mother indeed nothing is said, so that probably she was gone to a better world; and of their father, though but little is recorded, that little seems honorable to his character. When a man is introduced in Scripture as *the son of* such a one, it will be found generally to denote something either good or bad, honorable or the opposite, in the parent's character, though most frequently it denotes that his character was exemplary, and worthy of being handed down to posterity on the sacred page. Now, immediately on Peter being called, you hear him thus addressed, "Thou art Simon, *the son of Jonas*;" and at a later period, "Blessed art thou, Simon, *Bar Jona*, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but *my* Father, who is in heaven." As though he had said, Here is one thing of which your own father never did, and never could inform you. But it was on one of the most memorable and affecting occasions

in his future existence that he was reminded of this connection, with an emphasis which, I doubt not, went with him to the grave. "Simon," said Jesus, "*son of Jonas*, lovest thou me?" Surely there must have been design in this *mode* of address, repeated as it was not less than three times. Was there not something under it, and more meant than met the ear? Was it not saying in effect,—Oh, Simon! only act in character, and *be a son* worthy of such a Father, as well as an apostle worthy of your Lord and Master? Thus, at the calling, the congratulation, and the reproof of Peter, equally intended for the formation of his character, the name of his Father is never omitted.

Another son of this venerable parent was Andrew. He was one of the two first who, by the direction of the Baptist, found the Messiah, and who not only evinced the strongest attachment, but exulted that he had found the key to a book with which he had been well acquainted. He instantly seeks for his own brother, Simon, saying, "We have found him of whom *Moses in the law and the prophets did write.*" He it was, too, who without loss of time enjoyed the felicity of first introducing Peter to his Lord and Saviour.

By the time that these two individuals were called to a constant attendance on Jesus, the old man, Jonas, is generally supposed to have been dead, no mention being made of him, as there is of Zebedee, when his two sons were called.\* If so, this accounts for the slender notice of him in the Evangelical history. His name, however,

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\* By this time also Peter had taken James and John, the sons of Zebedee, into partnership in business with him,—a proof, by the way, of subsisting friendship, and of the closest previous intimacy. That their attachment to Christ may have contributed to cement their union in one business is not improbable, as for some time Peter at least had known him; but, whether or not, the Saviour broke up



is introduced with honor, and, in the training of these his sons, every candid reader will feel disposed to believe he had been exemplary. As it was an advantage to David that he was the son of Jesse, so it should seem it had been to them, that they were the sons of Jonas.

The information, however, respecting the parents of the rest of these apostles is more ample, besides being in itself interesting in no common degree.

James and John come next in order, the influence of whose parents in the formation of their character is more evident, from the deep interest which they themselves took in the cause of the Messiah. It is true that John the Baptist was the harbinger of the Messiah, but still he came to make ready a people *prepared for the Lord*, as well as to call sinners to repentance. Much remained for him to do and say in every case; but preparation-work had unquestionably been going on, and in this it is not difficult to descry the hand of parents. To part cheerfully with a son, already engaged in business and often assisting his father, when called to wait constantly on the Saviour in the days of his reproach, while his cause was yet only in prospect, will surely be admitted to have evidenced something like both faith and love. But here was a Father, who, in one day, parted with his two only sons, and yet seems to have cheerfully acquiesced. The old man, Zebedee, was with James and John when they were called away; yet, however much their leaving himself as well as their nets involved, so far as he is concerned, not a word is heard against it. Here too was a

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the whole concern,—took the three partners into union with himself, encouraging them by the assurance, that from henceforth they should be engaged in nobler employment. These were the men who saw him in the height of his glory on Mount Tabor, and in the depth of his humiliation in Gethsemane,—the men whom he favored with such peculiar distinction.

Mother, who not only approved, but followed their footsteps; nay, set them an example, and, in some respects, kept still a-head of them; for she not only followed Jesus, but ministered to him of her substance. True, her zeal, like that of her children and all the apostles, was, occasionally, not according to knowledge; and, in requesting for these her children the most honorable places in Christ's kingdom, she was wrong. Maternal ambition she might display in this one instance, but still, by her ministering to Jesus, she had discovered her superiority to the love of the world, as well as her devout attachment to his person and kingdom. This incident, however, is important, so far as Salome is concerned. James and John, who themselves also, at that period, desired to enjoy the right and left hand of the Saviour, seem to have thought that, by employing their *mother* as the petitioner, they were most likely to ensure success,—at once a striking proof of the power which she still possessed over them, and of the high esteem which they believed the Saviour entertained for her character. Yes, she gave the Messiah, with all her heart, two sons for apostles,—followed herself in his train, contributing to his support,—and to her was the melancholy but honorable task assigned of receiving the mother of Jesus, and consoling her while the Messiah was yet bleeding on the tree of execution. To her too, on the morning of his resurrection, he appeared, and to her he spoke before he did so to either of her sons; nay, to any of the apostles. Such was Salome, a woman worthy of being the mother of the disciple whom Jesus loved. Surely then, without saying more of Zebedee, to such a mother both James and John must have been greatly indebted.

Mary, the mother of four of the apostles, as well as of Joses or Joseph (who is generally regarded to have been one of the two individuals whom the apostles proposed as

qualified to fill the place of Judas, and who, therefore, had accompanied the Messiah in all his travels), sustained a character equal to that of Salome, her constant companion. This eminent woman had the felicity not only of furnishing four out of the twelve apostles of the Lamb,—she, too, followed him, and she also ministered to him of her substance, with the cordial consent of such a man as Cleopas her husband. At the closing scene, to her also was given the honor of standing by, and sustaining the mother of Jesus, when he was stretched on the cross. Yes, close by her, and near the cross, stood Mary, accompanied by Salome, and there she heard the Saviour address his mother and the beloved John in these affecting words:—"Woman, behold thy son," "Man, behold thy mother." In consequence of this dying injunction, we know what followed: in "that hour" the injunction was obeyed. At the commencement of the great darkness, she is generally supposed to have been led off the ground by John and his mother, Salome, and there she had an opportunity of gratifying an attachment, equally conspicuous with that of the wife of Cleopas.\* These two

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\* Thus did the Great Redeemer himself conclude his life as he had begun it, by giving a testimony in favor of *filial* piety, consigning to the disciple whom he loved, a mother now full of anguish, who, when the sufferer was a child, had carried him in her bosom up and down through the Holy Land; nay, down into Egypt, and back again, or altogether more than eight hundred miles;—a mother who had revered him when only twelve years old, and who, through life, had most religiously observed his sayings, laying them up in her heart, and pondering over them. To her, oh, what an hour was this! yet, when the sky had cleared, we find her again still quite in character. And O, when she did see the apostles rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for *his* sake,—when she did see the multitude of them that believed, to be of one heart and of one soul,—here was joy indeed, which was meant to counter-balance all her deep anguish. Probably no other human heart was ever acquainted with such extremes, in point of feeling.

individuals, the parents of six of the apostles, united with Mary Magdalene, in the purchase of spices for embalming the body of Jesus; and, though their purchase was altogether unnecessary, on the morning of the resurrection they were amply repaid. Salome has indeed been already noticed, but she may again be referred to, in company with her friend and inseparable companion. These were the two women to whom the angel first announced the resurrection, and to whom he said, "Be not affrighted; for I know that ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified.—He is not here, but is risen: come, see the place where the Lord lay." To them also did he give the charge of informing the apostles; nay, to these two parents did our Lord himself make his second appearance, saying, "All hail!" and repeating the commission which the angel had given, but in still more endearing terms, he styles their children and the other apostles, his brethren. Thus, did they not only see him, but believed in the event before the apostles themselves!

Nor must Cleopas or Alpheus, the husband of Mary, and the Father of these Apostles, be forgotten. You may conjecture what his character must have been, and how very high he stood in the Saviour's estimation, when, though not an apostle, he appeared to him before them, Peter only having seen him in the former part of the day. Cleopas was one of the two highly-favored men to whom our Lord appeared on the road to Emmaus.—"Did not our hearts burn within us," said they, "while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"—No wonder; he walked with them leisurely several miles, for it was more than seven miles distant from Jerusalem, and vouchsafed to him and his companion more of his conversation on the day of his resurrection than he did to any of his children; for he actually expounded to them, in *all the Scriptures*, the

things concerning himself. The deep interest which Cleopas and his companion took in all this is finely drawn, in their entreaties which prevailed with the Messiah to sit down at the table with them. This was the man with whom, after his resurrection, our Lord first engaged in devotional exercises. Over the food of which he was about to partake, the Saviour condescended to implore the Divine blessing; nay, he himself broke the bread, and gave to them, before he ceased to be visible. Judge then of the intense interest of Cleopas, and with what feelings he must have returned, as he immediately did, though, as one of his arguments with Jesus, he had said, "the day is far spent, for it is towards evening." Judge what must have been his feelings, when he returned to inform his sons and the other apostles of this appearance, and of this long conversation, over and above "all that had happened."—What a change to him, upon entering Jerusalem, from the feelings with which he had so pensively left it!

Now, assuredly, the man, to whom our Lord condescended on such a day to pay such regard, must have enjoyed a high place in his esteem,—the man who could appreciate such an extensive expository range over the Old Testament must have been well acquainted with this, his Bible,—the man whose heart so burned within him must have been a saint of the highest order. But then, this man was the *father*, and his wife the *mother* of a third of the apostleship. Is it not remarkable—is it not confirmatory of the subject before us, that the husband and wife, who appear so conspicuously in connection with the great God, our Saviour, and with the greatest of all earthly events, should turn out to be the parents of not less than four of the apostles? Is it not also especially worthy of notice, how the Saviour, on the day he rose from the dead, employs first *maternal* and then *paternal* influence to induce in the minds of these their children,

as well as the other apostles, the faith of his own resurrection? Surely the influence of this eminent pair, and their weight of character, must have been great; and where had these fallen with so much weight as on such sons? Yes, unquestionably, their influence and their example must have had corresponding power over these their children.

In adverting to the Sun of Righteousness, I could not persuade myself to be less particular, since, if guided by his light, parental duty and influence will be regarded as belonging to the very root of society, and as laying a deep foundation for spiritual prosperity in the church. For what is all this, if it is not a family-group, or a little group of families? What is it but "the hearts of the fathers turned to their children, and the hearts of the children turned to their fathers?" Is it not now manifest—is it not felt how remarkably, and to what extent our blessed Lord availed himself of the influence of the parental character, and the power of natural family attachments, where the fear of God had been made the bond of union?

*Second,* THE POWER WHICH THE PARENT ENJOYS OF FORMING THE CHILD TO GREATNESS OF CHARACTER, is another striking proof of the energy inherent in the Family Constitution.

To this source the eminence of most of the great men in Scripture may be traced. Whether the children at last rose to be prophets, or legislators, or kings, though much more is recorded of them than of their parents, their hand and their influence is, in many instances, abundantly manifest; nay, even when nothing else is recorded of the son, except the name, his lineage is thought deserving of notice. Of the sixteen prophets, whose writings we consult and so admire, we know perhaps less than of any other men so eminent. The only mark of inspired dis-

inction, however, is the record of their descent. Eight out of the sixteen are named in connection with the father who gave them birth: Zechariah's grandfather is also mentioned, and Zephaniah's ancestors are traced back to the extent of the fourth generation. This patronymic style, I am aware, is generally passed over, as recording nothing more than the surname of the individual; yet I query, whether in the Sacred Writings it is not often intended to involve something more. However, putting these extraordinary men altogether out of view, I may notice two or three others from Scripture, before proceeding to various proofs taken from authentic general history, corroborative of the remark at the head of this division.

DAVID.—The king of Israel, taken all in all, was one of the most extraordinary men of whom we read, since he was, in fact, the highest personal type of the Messiah. On him, it is true, at a very early period, the eye of the Almighty had been fixed; but with the training up of Jesse, or of his worthy partner, the mother, he will not interfere; nor is David taken out of their hands till an impression is made which never left him. The first notice of him in Scripture is after Samuel had mourned for years together over the misconduct and the rejection of Saul. He is then informed that God had found a youth among the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, suitable for the throne. His youth indeed seems to have staggered all parties. His brethren are displeased, while Samuel and Saul are alike astonished at his premature character; and well they might. When he was anointed to be king another day, the ruddy boy, "withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to," could not be more than fifteen years of age! Shortly after this, he was familiar with remarkable interpositions in his favor, which he

rightly interpreted as divine. At such an early age he had encountered and destroyed a lion and a bear, and he was but about twenty when he slew Goliath. Very soon after this, his character for bravery, and his skill in music, are alike established, and he is also represented as "prudent in matters." Now, this development of character, at such an early period, is a circumstance decidedly in favor of the influence of his parents. The truth is, that David was the son of their old age, for Jesse "went among men for an old man in the days of Saul," and on him they were encouraged to bestow peculiar pains.

The name of this good old Parent, however, is more than once introduced in Scripture in connection with a greater than David; and this it is which seems to mark him out as a character of great influential power. Is it nothing that, long after David was gone to the grave, his name should be glanced at in such language as this? "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord God shall rest upon him." And when even the conversion of the Gentiles is spoken of, a similar style is preferred. "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, —to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." What though this form of expression was adopted to symbolize the lowliness of the Redeemer's parentage, surely it is to the honor of the father of David that he is so introduced? This connection of David with his father had however been recognized when, at the age of fifteen, he was first introduced to notice. "I have found David, the son of Jesse," said Jehovah, "a man after my own heart, which shall fulfil all my will." Now, is it too much to suppose that the foundation of the Divine choice rested on his past filial obedience? Was it not this that afforded the fairest promise of his future conduct? Indeed I should not wonder if his exaltation to the throne was



intended to operate on him, partly as a reward of his uniform respect and subjection. Having revered the father of his flesh, he is now called to display his superior reverence to the Father of his spirit. If God knew Abraham, from his past conduct, that he would command his children, so he knew David, that he would obey, as he had already done. "He *will*," said the Lord, "do all things that I will."

Yes, to this old man David certainly had been a most dutiful child; and when, in other days, he came into deep distress, so highly did he think of his beloved mother as to plead even his descent from her, if not also the pains she had taken with him, as one ground of his petitions. "O turn unto me," he prays, "and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the *son of thine handmaid*." On another occasion he says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." I have thought it not improbable, that here he alluded to the death of his mother, since, as though he had desired to follow in her train, he immediately adds, "O Lord! truly I am thy servant; I am *thy* servant, and the *son of thine handmaid*." "Not only," as though he had said, "am I subject to thine authority and obedient to thy laws, but I am the child of a godly mother." In delineating character, the greatest caution is observable in Scripture: let the reader therefore only consider what is involved in the expression, "handmaid of the Lord,"—the terms employed with reference to the mother of Samuel and the mother of Jesus,—he will then be disposed to admit the influence which the wife of Jesse, as well as Jesse himself, had in forming the man "according to God's own heart."

One scene in the life of this great man shows the high regard which he entertained for these his parents. Concealing himself from Saul in the cave of Adullam, he felt

in the greatest extremity. Appealing to God, he exclaimed, "They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down." As for himself, his mind was fixed. "In the shadow of thy wings," says he, "will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." But when his parents came to sympathize with him there, they must not be so exposed. Recollecting, perhaps, that the grandmother of Jesse, his father, was a Moabitess, he conducts him and his mother to the other side of the Dead Sea, to Mizpeh of Moab: "and he said to the king of Moab, Let my Father and my Mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you till I know what God will do with me. And he brought them before the king of Moab: and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the cave."

The death of this venerable pair, or at least the solace of their company, and the benefit of their advice, David surely had in view on another occasion; for whatever others did, long as they lived, they never cast him off; no, they never once voluntarily *forsook* him; and his language goes to the heart as finely descriptive of the only way in which he imagined, that, to him, the loss could ever be repaired in this world. "*Leave* me not," he says, "*leave* me not, neither *forsake* me, O God of my salvation! When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up! Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies." At all events, for an individual grown up to manhood, who had already been celebrated by the daughters of Israel for his prowess as a warrior, who had been anointed to be a king, and had the prospect of a throne, and such a throne! for such a man thus to refer to his *father and mother*, and to hand this down to posterity, I must consider an indubitable proof of a great mind: and if, by this time, he was already on the throne, these expressions of filial regard render him greater still. What

became of the old people we are not informed : but, long as David lived, he remembered his father. When even Solomon ascended the throne in his sight, he forgot not his descent from such a parent ; and, in the last Psalm he is generally supposed to have penned, he closes by saying, —“ the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.” When even his last words are recorded, (2 Samuel xxiii. 1.), the father’s name, it seems, must not be omitted : so that, to the very close of life, this great and extraordinary man is held up to us as the “ *stem of Jesse.*” Parental influence therefore, in David’s case, will, it is presumed, now be admitted.

As a father, David himself will yet be noticed. Amidst the affairs of his kingdom, and frequent wars, as a parent, at one period, he failed sadly, and, as a husband, he fell. For such neglect, however, even the affairs of a kingdom form no apology. These sins, therefore, not only cost him extreme anguish, but they stand recorded as the greatest blots in his character. Still, after his own iniquities had corrected him, and his backslidings had reproved him, there was one child who filled his old heart with joy. This, however, was a son whom he *himself* instructed, and one of whom both himself and the mother took such care, and with whom they were at such pains, as will appear afterwards.

**JOHN THE BAPTIST.**—To this parental influence, eminence in the church as well as in the state may very often be distinctly traced.

Of John the Baptist, one said, who knew perfectly every prophet that had preceded him, “ Verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.”

But this wonderful man was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel, there enjoying the benefit of

such parents as Zacharias and Elizabeth must have been. "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." With what delight then must the Father have uttered these words: "And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way!" Old though he was, long as he breathed, he, as well as Elizabeth, must have watched over him; for their early death is, at best, a mere conjecture,—but other instructors John had none. The sayings respecting him might be "noised abroad through all the hill-country of Judea," and interest in other quarters a few like themselves; but scribes, or priests, or teachers of the law, he had none. Under his parent's eye, "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel."

**SOLOMON.**—Among the characters in Scripture conspicuous for greatness of mind, another individual, equally remarkable for political wisdom, and for general as well as religious knowledge, must not be omitted, Solomon, the son of David: a man who possessed "wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, as the sand that is on the sea-shore,—whose wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt; one, in short, who was wiser than all men, and whose fame was in all nations round about: who uttered three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five,—who spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; who spake also of beasts and of fowl, of creeping things and of fishes."

It is true that, at one remarkable period of his existence, he received what no parent, however anxious, could bestow; an immense accession to all his powers immedi-

ately from the Almighty: but then this accession to his former greatness was in answer to his own request, and it stands recorded as the effect of his own choice. Now, at the auspicious moment when Jehovah put the question, "Ask *what* I shall give thee."—Why *select* wisdom and understanding? At a moment when he had every thing in his option which God himself could give, had parental influence and parental advice, tenderly and often repeated, no share in guiding him to this selection? Solomon himself will tell you. "I was," he replies, "I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me,—Let thine heart retain my words; keep my commandments and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.—Wisdom is the *principal* thing; therefore get wisdom: and, with all thy getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her." To these parental monitions, if the reader desires to hear an echo of approbation from heaven, he may do so, in 1 Kings iii. 10—14; and should he wish to know what Solomon himself, in mature age, thought of such parental instruction, he will find it in such words as these,—"Keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: when thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

After the numerous proofs already adduced, does it not now appear evident, that the Almighty has condescended for ages to discover his marked regard for the domestic constitution, and its strong natural attachments, as affording to him the most efficient means, either of perpetuating his fear in our world, or reviving it? Not that Scripture

does not furnish us with instances, where no such analogy holds. For the sovereignty of God there is ample scope in this rebellious world ; but, so far from disregarding a constitution of his own creation and upholding, he has, in the great majority of recorded cases, taken the opportunity of pointing out to his people the moral power and numerous advantages inherent in its very frame. I am far from having forgotten Elijah, or Daniel, or Paul : but neither these nor any other can weaken the force of what has been advanced. The two former, had Scripture not been silent, might have confirmed these statements ; and, as for the last, his case was altogether out of the usual course of nature ; and, with his own characteristic humility, he scruples not so to tell us.

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Let it not, however, be supposed, that in the Sacred Scriptures alone are to be found apt and forcible illustrations of the remark with which this division begins. No. These are characters, it is true, that will continue to abide a comparison with the illustrious of any age ; like the lofty mountains of nature, whether existing in Europe, in Asia, or America, which are admired for their altitude and sublimity by every spectator and in every period of time. But, with a view to interest the young and rising generation, the parents of a future age, as well as to illustrate to parents themselves, the power of forming to future greatness of character, which is lodged in their hands by the appointment of God, I may be permitted to introduce a few of the greatest men who have lived since the volume of Revelation was closed. With their names, it is true, all men are already familiar : but, to the parental eye especially, there is scarcely a more interesting point in which their characters can be studied, than the moment when these were yet only in the bud. It will then be

seen that what Cowper said of his oak might be applied to most of them :

Time was, when, settling on thy leaf, a fly  
 Could shake thee to the root—and time has been  
 When tempests could not.

ALFRED THE GREAT.—When the early period in which he lived, and the disadvantages under which he labored, are considered, perhaps Alfred the Great stands at the head of British biography. A man who was not only skilled in the art of government, but who acquired such a knowledge of the Scriptures, and the truths they unfold ; who cultivated, at such an age, philosophy and history, geography, and astronomy, and botany ; who was himself an author as well as a translator and corrector of previous historians ; a man whose genius, not confined to literature, extended to the arts of architecture and ship-building, gold and silver workmanship, and even other branches. All these acquirements have justly entitled him to the epithet of “ great ;” though another simple and impressive addition to his name, by an author of the eleventh century, crowns the whole. He is there styled, “ Alfred the truth-teller.”

Of the greatness of Alfred’s mind, some idea may be formed from the manner in which he speaks of the Divine Being. In reply to the question, “ Why is God called the Highest Eternity ?” he says—

“ Because we know very little of that which was before us, except by memory and by asking ; and yet we know less of that which will be after us. That alone exists rationally to us which is present ; but to HIM all is present, as well that which was before as that which now is, and that which after us will be. All of it is present to HIM. His riches increase not, nor do they ever diminish. He never remembers any thing, because he never forgets aught : He seeks nothing, nor inquires, because he knows it all : He searches for nothing, because he loses nothing : He pursues no creature, because none can fly from him : He dreads nothing, because he

knows no one more powerful than himself, nor even like him: He is always giving, and never wants: He is always Almighty, because he always wishes good and never evil. To him there is no need of any thing. He is always seeing: He never sleeps: He is always alike mild and kind. He will always be Eternal: hence there never was a time that he was not, nor ever will be. He is always free: He is not compelled to any work. From his divine power, he is everywhere present. His greatness no man can measure. He is not to be conceived bodily, but spiritually, so as now wisdom is and reason. But he is wisdom: He is reason itself."

Of David, the king of Israel, we judge by his Psalms; and certainly the exercise of devotion, if left on record, often illustrates, in the most satisfactory manner, not only the views of the individual as to religion itself, but the loftiness and elevation of his soul. For a few moments, then, listen to this Anglo-Saxon king, of the ninth century, when pouring out his heart before God:

"Come now to help me, O Thou who art the only Eternal; the true God of Glory: Father and Son, and so art now; and Holy Spirit, without any separation or mutability, and without any necessity or diminution of power, and who never diest. Thou art always dwelling in the highest brightness, and in highest happiness: in perfect unanimity, and in the fullest abundance. With thee there is no deficiency of good, but Thou art ever abiding, replete with every felicity, through endless time.

To thee, O God, I call and speak. Hear, O hear me, Lord! for thou art my God and my Lord; my Father and my Creator; my ruler and my hope; my wealth and my honor; my house; my country; my salvation and my life! Hear, hear me, O Lord! Few of thy servants comprehend Thee. But Thee alone I love, indeed, above all other things: Thee I seek; Thee I will follow; Thee I am ready to serve. Under thy power I desire to abide, for Thou alone art the Sovereign of all. I pray Thee to command me as thou wilt."

After this, the reader will certainly not object to another proof of the eminence of his devotion:

"Now I have sought Thee: unlock thy door, and teach me how I may come to Thee. I have nothing to bring to Thee, but my good-will; but I myself have nothing else. I know nothing that is



better than to love Thee, the heavenly and the spiritual One, above all earthly things. But I know not how I can come to Thee, unless Thou permittest me. Teach it to me, and help me. If those, through Thee, find the truth, who find Thee, give me that truth. If they, through Thee, obtain any virtue who obtain Thee, impart to me that virtue : if wisdom, grant me that wisdom. Add to me the hope of the life everlasting, and pour thy love upon me.

Oh ! how thy goodness is to be admired, for it is unlike all other goods. My desire is to Thee ; and this most chiefly, because without Thee I cannot come to Thee. If thou abandonest me, then I shall be removed from Thee ; but I know that Thou wilt not forsake me, unless I forsake Thee. But I will not forsake Thee, because Thou art the highest good. There is none of those who seek Thee rightly, that may not find Thee. But they only will seek Thee rightly, whom Thou instructest to seek Thee, and teachest how to find Thee."

Many other specimens might be given ; for " the subject never occurs to his pen, but he dilates upon it with such visible affection, as to show that this was the habitual and predominant feeling of his lofty and cultivated mind."

Inquire now, as to the earliest existing cause, of all these prodigious acquirements, at such an early period, in a man who passed through the severest civil commotions, and who, establishing himself and his posterity on the throne of England, brought order and subordination out of the greatest confusion ; and who, during the greater part of his life, was also the subject of very frequent bodily anguish. Go back to the days of his childhood, and, though greatly above his years in the knowledge of men and things, yet see him passing into youth still unable to read ! But when Alfred was twelve years old, Judith, his step-mother, the grand-daughter of Charlemagne, " was sitting one day, surrounded by her family, with a manuscript of Saxon poetry in her hands. With a happy judgment, she proposed it as a gift to him who would the soonest learn to read it. The elder princes, one then a king, the others in mature youth or manhood, thought the

reward inadequate to the task, and were silent ; but the mind of Alfred, captivated by the prospect of information, and pleased with the beautiful decoration of the first letter of the writing, inquired if she actually intended to give it to such of her children as would the soonest learn to understand and repeat it ? His Mother, repeating the promise, with a smile of joy at the question, he took the book, found out an instructor, and learnt to read it. When his industry had crowned his wishes with success, he recited it to her. To this important, though seemingly trivial incident, we owe all the intellectual cultivation, and all the literary works of Alfred, as well as all the benefit which by these he imparted to his countrymen. If this family conversation had not occurred, Alfred would probably have lived and died as ignorant, as unimportant, and as little known, as his three brothers."

The thirst thus excited by his Mother was not to be soon satisfied. In future life, therefore, he was to be seen inquiring for teachers on every subject, or teaching himself where these could not be procured. He was to be seen searching most eagerly for books, and sparing no cost in procuring them. For one book on cosmography, Alfred is said to have given a very large estate !

This strong desire after learning, so effectually implanted by Judith, may, however, be traced to some circumstances in early life, and then his Father appears. Certainly he had neglected his education, so far as the mechanical art of reading goes ; but of Alfred he had been particularly fond. When only about five years of age, he had sent him to see the world, under proper care, as far as Italy ; and before he had reached his eighth year, his father himself went with him, through France, a second time, as far as Rome. The survey of the Capitol, as well as all that he had seen elsewhere, must have produced strong impressions even on a child, es-

pecially *such* a child, and must have engendered, in a mind like his, great eagerness for knowledge, and the cultivation of his mind.

At a subsequent period of his life, while a young man, there is no doubt that Alfred was a very different character, and often fell into such a misery, that none of his subjects knew where he was; and it seems equally evident, that, during his seclusion and afflicted state, in a little islet, formed by the stagnated waters of the Thone and Parret, in Somersetshire, called Athelway, a great change was effected in his mind. Indeed after this he appears a new character, and, in future life, the subject of such varied excellencies, as the grace and power of God alone can produce; but still the parents of this man may, and must, be allowed their share in forming his mind, and even sowing the seeds of his future eminence.

The greatness of some men, however, consists merely in cultivating their own minds; but to do this, mainly with a view to benefit others, is a much higher character. If it is a great thing to be truly blessed, it is greater still to be a blessing. Such a man was Alfred. With his code of laws and trial by jury; his arrangements for enlightening and civilizing his whole kingdom; his foreign correspondence; and the never-to-be-forgotten sentiment expressed by him in his will, "IT IS JUST THAT THE ENGLISH SHOULD FOR EVER REMAIN FREE AS THEIR OWN THOUGHTS;" with any of these we cannot interfere—domestic economy being our present object. Now it so happens, that, in the arrangement and order of his family; in the distribution of his time; in the disposal of his property; and in the education and training of his children; Alfred was as eminent an example to posterity as he was in any one of the excellencies already mentioned. Several of his children died in infancy, but five survived him; and he lived to be rewarded in a great degree for

all his vigilant superintendence. His eldest daughter, Ethelfleda, was an extraordinary woman, and is extolled as having been "the wisest lady in England." His youngest son, Ethelweard, became celebrated for his learning. His eldest son and successor, Edward, and his daughter Alfritha, were educated at home, under his own eye, with the utmost care. It was to this son that Alfred, at the close of all his greatness, in this world, addressed his patriarchal adieu, so finely descriptive of his character as a man, a monarch, and a parent :

"Thou," quoth Alfred, "my dear son, set thee now beside me, and I will deliver thee true instructions. My Son, I feel that my hour is coming : my countenance is wan ; my days are almost done. We must now part. I shall to another world, and thou shalt be left alone in all my wealth. I pray thee (for thou art my dear child), strive to be a father and a lord to thy people. Be thou the children's father, and the widow's friend. Comfort thou the poor, and shelter the weak ; and with all thy might, right that which is wrong. And, Son, govern thyself by law ; then shall the Lord love thee, and God, above all things, shall be thy reward. Call thou upon Him to advise thee in all thy need, and so shall He help thee the better to compass that which thou wouldest."\*

GEORGE WASHINGTON.—To that of Alfred, I would fain add some notice of another ruler, in modern times ; but the information in regard to his earlier years is still very scanty : though, so far as it goes, it tends to the confirmation of all that has been advanced. I refer to that extraordinary man, to whom, above all others, America is indebted, at this moment, for all her civil and religious privileges. The close of his public life may be taken as a specimen of what must have preceded it. The resignation of high and commanding power, but a few years after it had, in a great degree, by a man's own energy,

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\* See Spelman's Life, and the History of the Anglo-Saxons, by Sharon Turner ; 3d edition. A most interesting work.

been acquired, is almost singular in the history of our species; but the *manner* of doing so will mightily contribute to increase our admiration.

“The acceptance of,” said Washington, in his farewell address, “and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped, that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives, which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn.”—“The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the Government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience, in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence in myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me, more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.”

Still anxious, in the highest degree, for the health and prosperity of his country, he then tendered much faithful, and sound, and solemn advice, of which the following is a single specimen :

“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, the firmest props of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, Where is the security for property—for reputation—for life,—if the sense of religious obligation *desert* the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality *can* be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the

influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who, that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference on attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric? Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

To that retirement to which he had looked forward with eager desire, Washington was now about to withdraw; but before bidding his adieu to Congress forever, he concluded his unprecedented address in the following terms:

"Though, in reviewing the incidents of administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects, not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the ALMIGHTY to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend! I shall also carry with me the hope, that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest. Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate, with pleasing expectation, that retreat in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws, under a free government, the ever-favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward as, I trust, of our mutual cares, and labors, and dangers."

In witnessing *such* a resignation after such a life, without doubt we see a man, in this his retirement, far greater than the mightiest conqueror at the very summit of his ambition, since it requires much less magnanimity to win the conquest, than to refuse the spoil.

Now, in tracing this character to its origin and infancy, it is certain that his Parents enjoy the honor of having so far formed it; and, but for maternal tenderness, it is probable that we should scarcely have known of such a man. Under the eye of his parents he was reared up from infancy. His father died when he was about ten years old; and from the language employed, *his* watchfulness over his son may be inferred; for we are informed that "the care of his education *then* devolved on his mother." It was, however, but a few years after this, when he discovered a strong predilection for the sea; and an inferior situation on board of ship was in prospect, when the influence of a Mother, who had paid such judicious attention to this her child, was not exerted in vain. The place was actually procured, and, but for her, at the age of fifteen, he had become merely a midshipman in the British navy! She *alone* prevented a step which would probably have changed the whole course of his future life; and thus, as far as Washington's influence is granted, to the judgment and bosom of a single parent, and that a Mother and a Widow, may the present political enjoyments, and the future usefulness of America be traced!

The course of Divine Providence has often been compared to a chain; but there is one peculiarity in this chain, on which the careful observer, in every age, has gazed with pleasing astonishment,—the almost imperceptible minuteness of some of its links, compared with the vast magnitude of others. So it has been supposed, if a private country gentleman, about the year 1730, had not been overturned in his carriage, that America, instead of being as at this moment, might have continued a dependent colony of England. This country gentleman happened to be Augustine Washington, Esq., who was

thus providentially *thrown* into the company of a lady, who afterwards became his wife, and the envied mother of George Washington !

“ Just so, th’ Omnipotent who turns  
The system of a world’s concerns,  
From mere minutæ can educe  
Events of most important use.”

In conclusion, however, I cannot help remarking, that one secret of this great man’s successful career seems to have been owing to his tracing, throughout his whole life, in such an exemplary manner, so distinctly and so frequently, all the incidents in the American struggle, not to human instrumentality, but to the finger of Providence.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.—In point of talent and variety of acquirements, Sir William Jones is generally allowed to have possessed the attributes of a great mind. In the short space of forty-seven years, he had acquired a knowledge of arts, sciences, and languages, which has seldom been equalled, and scarcely, if ever, surpassed. As a philologist, especially, he had no rival. Among eight languages which he had studied *critically*, are found the first of Eastern as well as Western tongues. Eight more, though he had studied them less perfectly, were quite intelligible with a dictionary ; and twelve more, though studied least perfectly, were to him all attainable. He might be acquainted with others, but the number here distinctly specified, in a private memorandum of his own, is twenty-eight ! At so early an age as that of eighteen, we find him, when at home, of which he was very fond, reading the best authors in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, following, in all respects, the plan of education recommended by Milton, which he had by heart ; and thus, to use his



own words, "with the fortune of a peasant, giving himself the education of a prince." This wonderful man, however, actually disdained the character of a *mere* linguist; regarding languages as nothing more than the keys of learning, which qualified him to unlock the literary hoards of ancient and modern times. His profound learning he therefore employed in elucidating the laws, the philosophy, and opinions of most nations. He died at the early age of forty-seven: but fourteen years before this, the following memorandum, in his own handwriting, will explain the purposes to which he intended to apply his learning; "Anno Ætat. 33. Resolved to learn no more rudiments of any kind, but to *perfect* myself in first 12 languages, as the *means* of acquiring accurate knowledge of, I. THE HISTORY, 1. of Man; 2. Nature. II. ARTS, 1. Rhetoric; 2. Poetry; 3. Painting; 4. Music. III.—1. Law; 2. Mathematics; 3. Dialectick.—N. B. Every species of *human* knowledge may be reduced to one or other of these divisions. Even law belongs partly to the history of man; partly as a science to dialectick. The twelve languages are—Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, German, English."

Many disquisitions, since published, were the fruit of this resolution; and it is remarkable, that whether they are philological or philosophical, chronological or botanical, they, as well as all his historical researches, not only fix the attention by their novelty, their depth, and their importance, but uniformly delight by their elegance of diction.

Viewed in connection with these uncommon literary acquirements, there were several moral qualities which have not failed to raise the man as much as the scholar in public esteem. Humility or condescension, modesty, humanity, and unbending integrity, were distinguishing

traits in his character. The first of these was displayed, we are informed, in “the candor and complacency with which he gave his attention to all persons of whatever quality, talents, or education; for it was a conclusion and a principle with him, that curious and important information might be gained even from the illiterate; and wherever it was to be found, he sought and seized it.” For his modesty, I would only refer to the epitaph, in a subsequent page, which he wrote for himself but a short time before his premature dissolution; and for his fine constitutional humanity one proof will be amply sufficient. One day, when addressing the Asiatic Society in Bengal, of which he was the origin and the president, when he came to their researches into the *animal* kingdom, he began in the following style :

“Could the figure, instincts, and qualities of birds, beasts, insects, reptiles, and fish, be ascertained, either on the plan of Buffon, or on that of Linnæus, without giving *pain* to the objects of our examination, few studies would afford us more solid instruction, or more exquisite delight; but I never could learn by what right, nor conceive with what feelings, a naturalist can occasion the misery of an innocent bird, and leave its young, perhaps, to perish in a cold nest, because it has gay plumage, and has never been accurately delineated; or deprive even a butterfly of its natural enjoyments, because it has the misfortune to be rare or beautiful: nor shall I ever forget the couplet of Fordausi, for which Sadi, who cites it with applause, pours blessings on his departed spirit :

Ah! spare yon emmet, rich in hoarded grain;  
He lives with pleasure, and he dies with pain.

This may be only a confession of weakness, and it certainly is not meant as a boast of peculiar sensibility; but whatever name may be given to my opinion, it has such an effect on my conduct, that I never would suffer the *cocila*, whose wild native wood-notes announce the approach of spring, to be caught in my garden, for the sake of comparing it with Buffon's description; though I have often examined the domestic and engaging *Mayana*, which ‘bids us good

morrow' at our windows, and expects, as its reward, little more than security. Even when a fine young *Manis* or *Pangolin* was brought to me, against my wishes, from the mountains, I solicited his restoration to his beloved rocks, because I found it impossible to preserve him in comfort at a distance from them."

Eleven years of his short life Sir William Jones spent in the capacity of a judge at Calcutta, where "the inflexible integrity with which he discharged the solemn duties of this station, will be long remembered both by Europeans and natives. So cautious was he to guard the independence of his character from any possibility of violation or imputation, that no solicitation could prevail upon him, to use his personal influence with the members of administration in India, to advance the private interests of friends whom he esteemed, and which he would have been happy to promote."

All that has already been said, though it might place this individual far above most other men, would, alas! avail but little or nothing, could we not add something more. But surely our esteem for such a man cannot fail to rise much higher, when we see him, after a dispassionate and careful examination of the Sacred Volume, record his sentiments in the following terms, written with his own hand, on the leaf at the end of his Bible :

"I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written."

Nor did he confine these sentiments to his own bosom, or record them only in his closet. Upon another occasion, in 1791, when addressing the Asiatic Society of Bengal, though theological subjects formed no part of the subject immediately before him, we hear him saying,—

“I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts, which we call, from their excellence, the *Scriptures*, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected, within the same compass, from all other books that were composed in any age, or in any idiom. The two parts of which the *Scriptures* consist, are connected by a chain of compositions, which bear no resemblance, in form or style, to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning; the antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unstrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief that they were genuine compositions, and consequently *inspired*.”

In matters of eternal concern, the authority of the highest human opinions has no claim to be admitted, except as it may be opposed to that of men of inferior learning and penetration; and even after these sentiments, so finely expressed, I by no means represent him as equally eminent for Christianity, in the proper sense of the word, as he was for other attainments. As he *might* have been so, so I wish he had; but in early life, at least, he was inclined to form his character too much after some of the ancient Romans, especially Cicero; and his researches, too, so far as revealed religion is concerned, bring him forward mainly as a witness of profound acquirements against the unbeliever. Few men in our world can examine, and analyze, and meet the learned, though frivolous, objections of the skeptic as he could:

‘A man who could foil, at their own play,  
A thousand would-be’s of the modern day.’

It is, however, truly gratifying, and in no common degree, to see such a man thus explore so vastly, and then subscribe with his hand to the truth of the sacred record, as well as publicly attest it in the presence of men so eminent for learning, both Asiatic and European. It is

equally interesting to see him at another time with the records of unbelieving nations in his hand, trace back, to the very spot to which the Scriptures refer, the origin of diverging tribes and discordant languages; to see him correcting their contradictory and absurd chronology, by the light of divine revelation; and with especial reference to those Scriptures, at which other men, though eminent, but of inferior attainment, have sneered, to hear him, after one of the largest surveys which has perhaps ever been taken by one man, pronounce them to be the very "Key of Knowledge."

At the same time, while the learning of Sir William Jones certainly gave some improper tincture to his religion; on the other hand, his views on that subject had such great power as even to sway him in the direction of all his learned investigations. After the elucidation and confirmation of divine truth, he was therefore, in mature life especially, often in pursuit; nay, amidst these very researches, one can see, at the same time, that the state and the destiny of his own immortal soul, occupied the grave attention of his retired moments. Nearly ten years before his dissolution, in 1784, we find him, during indisposition, using the following prayer:—"O thou Bestower of all good! if it please thee to continue my easy tasks in this life, grant me strength to perform them as a faithful servant; but if thy wisdom hath willed to end them by this thy visitation, admit me, not weighing my unworthiness, but through thy mercy declared in Christ, into thy heavenly mansions, that I may continually advance in happiness, by advancing in true knowledge and awful love of thee. Thy will be done!"

These, as well as other expressions, uttered in private, certainly give additional weight to his avowed opinions; while, as an appropriate conclusion to this very imperfect

sketch, in the following epitaph it will be seen that he is modestly silent upon all his intellectual attainments :

" Here was deposited  
 the mortal part of a man,  
 who feared God, but not death;  
 and maintained independence,  
 but sought not riches ;  
 who thought  
 none below him, but the base and unjust,  
 none above him, but the wise and virtuous ;  
 who loved  
 his parents, kindred, friends, country,  
 with an ardor  
 which was the chief source of  
 all his pleasures and all his pains ;  
 and who, having devoted  
 his life to their service,  
 and to  
 the improvement of his mind,  
 resigned it calmly,  
 giving glory to his Creator,  
 wishing peace on earth,  
 and with  
 good-will to all creatures,  
 on the [*twenty-seventh*] day of [*April,*]  
 in the year of our blessed Redeemer,  
 one thousand seven hundred [*and ninety-four.*]"\*

Now, to whom was Sir William Jones almost exclusively indebted, in his most important, because his earliest years, for all his future eminence? Who was it that bent the twig, or taught the young idea how to shoot? Who was it, that, to his incessant importunities for information on casual topics of conversation, and which were so watchfully stimulated, used then kindly and constantly to reply, "*Read, and you will know*"? Who was it that cultivated his mind, so that, in his fourth year, he was able to read any English book, and stored his mind from his birth

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\* See the Life of Sir William Jones, by Lord Teignmouth, and the Christian Observer for 1804, vol. iii.

to his ninth and tenth years? When, in his ninth year, he had the misfortune to break his thigh-bone, which detained him at home more than a year, who was it that was his constant companion, and amused him daily with the perusal of such English books as were adapted to his taste and capacity? For all this, and much more than this, we are referred to only one individual, and that was his dear Mother; an extraordinary woman, then a solitary widow, his father having died when William was only three years old! By nature Mrs. Jones possessed a strong understanding, which had been improved by her husband's conversation and instruction,—an eminent mathematician, who had raised himself, by his own industry, till he was the intimate friend of Sir Isaac Newton and others. Under the tuition of her husband, Mrs. Jones became a considerable proficient in algebra; and, with a view to qualify herself for the office of preceptor to her sister's son, who was destined to a maritime profession, made herself perfect in trigonometry, and the theory of navigation. After the death of her husband, she was urgently and repeatedly solicited, by the Countess of Macclesfield, to remain at Sherborn Castle; but having formed a plan for the education of her son, with an unalterable determination to pursue it, she politely, but firmly, declined the invitation, and sat down to her work.

With regard to religious instruction, we are informed, that she had taught him the creed and the ten commandments; but one effect of her daily maxim is too remarkable to be passed over in silence. “One morning, as he was turning over the leaves of a Bible, in his mother's closet, his attention was forcibly arrested by the sublime description of the angel, in the tenth chapter of Revelation; and the impression which his imagination received from it was never effaced. At a period of mature judgment, he considered the passage as equal in sublimity to

any in the inspired writings, and far superior to any that could be produced from mere human compositions; and he was fond of retracing and mentioning the rapture which he felt when he first read it. This remarkable incident took place before he had completed his *fifth* year. In one word, to this maxim of his mother's, "Read, and you will know," Sir William Jones himself "always acknowledged himself indebted for all his future attainments;" so that, while it has been asked, "Who can estimate the beneficial purposes, literary, political, and religious, to which his labors may hereafter possibly be applied?" I only add, at the same moment, let not the maternal heart and hand, which trained up the man when yet a child, ever be forgotten!

JOHN MILTON.—Of Milton's greatness of mind, it is superfluous here to say one word; but he has taken especial care that posterity should know to whom he considered himself almost entirely indebted for all his eminence as a man and a poet. He evidently expected to live in future times, at least in his own country; and in various compositions, especially poetic, aimed after something which he thought posterity would not willingly suffer to perish. In prose, however, as well as in verse, he resolved that he should so stand in connection with his parents, as, if possible, to animate the fathers of a future age.

His father, who had renounced the communion of the church of Rome, and thus forfeited the favor of his parents, and all his earthly prospects, had enjoyed, notwithstanding, the benefit of a liberal education at Oxford. He was particularly distinguished for his musical abilities, and is said to have been, not only a voluminous composer, but equal in science, if not in genius, to the best musicians of his age. Disinherited by his father, he began business,



in London, as a scrivener; from which, in consequence of upright and assiduous application, he retired, in comfortable circumstances, to his country-house, at Horton, near Colnebrook, in Buckinghamshire.

“My father,” says Milton, “was a man of the highest integrity; my mother, an excellent woman, was particularly known throughout the neighborhood for her charitable donations. My father destined me from a child for the pursuits of polite learning, which I prosecuted with such eagerness, that, after I was twelve years old, I rarely retired to bed from my lucubrations till midnight. This was the first thing which proved pernicious to my eyes, to the natural weakness of which were added frequent headaches. But as all this could not abate my instinctive ardor for learning, he provided me, in addition to the ordinary instructions of the grammar-school, with masters to give me daily lessons at home. Being thus instructed in various languages, and having gotten no slight taste of the sweetness of philosophy, he sent me to Cambridge, one of our two national colleges. There, aloof from all profligate conduct, and with the approbation of all good men, I studied seven years, according to the usual course of discipline and of scientific instruction, till I obtained, and with applause, the degree of master, as it is called; when, of my own free will, I returned home, leaving behind me, among most of the fellows of the college, who had shown me no ordinary attention, even an affectionate regret. At my father’s country-house, to which he had retired to pass the remainder of his days, being perfectly at my ease, I gave myself up entirely to reading the Greek and Latin writers; exchanging, however, sometimes, the country for the town, either for the purchase of books, or to learn something new in the mathematics, or in music, which at that time furnished the sources of my amusement. After passing five years in this way, I had the curiosity, after the death of my mother, to see foreign countries, and above all Italy; and having obtained permission of my father, [observe how he speaks of him even at this age!] I set out, attended by one servant.”

These five years were among the most important as well as the happiest in Milton’s life. There the father vigilantly still watched over his son, prompting and advising him in all his pursuits; and there this son composed several of his finest minor poems. Some of his

college companions seemed to have imagined that he was losing his time in thus retiring again to the roof of his parent in the country; but Milton thought very differently.

Distinguished as he was in early life for several very strong personal attachments to his companions in study, they could not draw him from his retreat. To one of these, Charles Diodati, whose early death he lamented so deeply, and, on returning from Italy, celebrated with so much tenderness, he says, in reference to this residence with his parents,

“ If peaceful days, in letter'd leisure spent,  
 Beneath my Father's roof, be banishment,  
 Then call me banish'd, I will ne'er refuse  
 A name expressive of the lot I chuse.  
 I would, that, exil'd to the Pontic shore,  
 Rome's hapless bard had suffer'd nothing more,  
 He then had equall'd even Homer's lays,  
 And Virgil! thou hadst won but second praise;  
 For here I woo the muse; with no control:  
 And here my books—my life—absorb me whole.”

His employments here have already been detailed in prose; and if the reader wishes for additional information in poetry, Milton himself will give it. He is again addressing his friend Diodati:

“ Wouldst thou, perhaps 'tis hardly worth thine ear,  
 Wouldst thou be told my occupation here?  
 The promis'd King of Peace employs my pen;  
 Th' eternal cov'nant made for guilty men;  
 The new-born Deity, with infant cries  
 Filling the sordid hovel where he lies;  
 The hymning angels, and the herald star  
 That led the wise, who sought him from afar;  
 And idols, on their own unhallow'd shore,  
 Dash'd, at his birth, to be rever'd no more!\*

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\* Oh! would that Milton had never dictated any sentiments inconsistent with these beautiful lines, as well as other passages in his prose writings! He, however, as well as a few others, it will be remembered, are introduced here, not as patterns of scriptural sentiment, but as specimens of mental greatness.

—— This theme on reeds of Albion I rehearse :  
 The dawn of that blest day inspir'd the verse ;  
 Verse that, reserved in secret, shall attend  
 Thy candid voice, my critic and my friend !”

Milton's parents had destined him for the ministry,—an idea in which he himself once indulged. This destination of his parents probably accounts for the tender and judicious caution of his father, in regard to the danger of his cultivating to excess his poetic genius ; but, at all events, it is to this parental caution that we are indebted for one of the finest poetical effusions of filial piety in existence :

“ Oh! that Pieria's spring would, through my breast,  
 Pour its inspiring influence, and rush  
 No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood !  
 That, for my venerable Father's sake,  
 All meaner themes renounc'd, my muse, on wings  
 Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain.  
 For thee, my Father! howsoe'er it please,  
 She frames this slender work, nor know I aught  
 That may thy gifts more suitably requite ;  
 Though to requite them suitably would ask  
 Returns much nobler, and surpassing far  
 The meagre stores of verbal gratitude :  
 But, such as I possess, I send thee all.”

From the closing passage of this beautiful Latin poem, translated by Cowper, it will be seen that both the children and parents of other days were in the eye of the poet :

“ But thou ! my Father, since to render thanks  
 Equivalent, and to requite by deeds  
 Thy liberality, exceeds my power ;  
 Suffice it, that I thus record thy gifts,  
 And bear them treasur'd in a grateful mind !  
 Ye, too, the favorite pastime of my youth,  
 My voluntary numbers, if ye dare  
 To hope longevity ; and to survive  
 Your master's funeral, not soon absorb'd

In the oblivious Lethæan gulf,  
 Shall to futurity perhaps convey  
 This theme; and by these praises of my sire  
 Improve the Fathers of a distant age!

“Such productions of true genius,” says Wharton, “with a natural and noble consciousness, anticipating its own immortality, are seldom found to fail.” To conclude, however, this imperfect sketch, if there are any lines in this poem more touching and sublime than any which have been quoted, they will be found in the anticipation of such a son uniting in praise with such a father in a brighter and a better world :

“We too, ourselves, what time we seek again  
 Our native skies, and one eternal now  
 Shall be the only measure of our being,  
 Crown'd all with gold, and chanting to the lyre  
 Harmonious verse, shall range the courts above,  
 And make the starry firmament resound.”

Such were the expressions of filial obligation by a man, who has been styled, by Sir William Jones, “the most perfect scholar as well as the sublimest poet that our country ever produced.”

BOERHAAVE.—Though of but a delicate constitution of body, this was one of those men who seem to think nothing worthy of their efforts, but what appears insurmountable to common understandings. He has been celebrated chiefly as a physician: he was, however, not only eminently skilled in history and genealogy, and versed in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, but his diligent employment, and delight for years, consisted in reading the Sacred Scriptures in their original languages; he added physic to divinity, chemistry to the mathematics, and anatomy to botany; and to all these, various branches of polite literature. He examined systems by experiment, and formed experiments into systems: he examined the

opinions of other men, but trusted only to his own. His all he had expended on his education ; when he afterwards amassed great wealth ; but his charities were very extensive. Known over all Europe, he received visits from three sovereigns,—the Grand Duke of Tuscany, William the Third, and Peter the Great ; the last of whom slept in his barge all night, before the house of the professor, that he might enjoy two hours of conversation with him early in the morning. Nor was his celebrity, especially as a physician, confined to Europe. A Chinese mandarin, anxious to obtain his advice, is said to have addressed his letter, “To the illustrious Boerhaave, Physician in Europe,” which was safely delivered. Amidst all this, Boerhaave was conspicuous for humility, amiable temper, and habitual piety. He it was who often said, when he heard of a criminal condemned to die, “Who can tell whether this man is not better than I? or if I am better, it is not to be ascribed to myself, but to the goodness of God.” Being once asked by a friend, who had admired his patience under great provocations, whether he knew what it was to be angry? he answered, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that he was naturally quick of resentment ; but that he had, by daily prayer and meditation, at length attained to this mastery over himself ; and often would he affirm, that a strict obedience to the doctrine, and a diligent imitation of the example of our blessed Lord, was the only foundation of true and lasting tranquillity. In perfect harmony with these frequent affirmations, as soon as this man rose in the morning, it was, throughout his whole life, his daily practice, to retire for an hour to private prayer and meditation. This, he said, gave him spirit and vigor in all the business of the day, and this he therefore used to commend as a rule of life. In one word, so far was Boerhaave from being made impious by philosophy, or vain by knowledge, that he

ascribed all his abilities to the bounty, and all his piety to the grace of God. Now, to whom, under God, do we stand indebted for such a character? His eminence as a physician has been remarked; and for this, although his choice was finally decided by a successful cure which he performed on himself, and the effect of very cruel and unjust scandal thrown on his character, as if he favored infidel principles, when he was actually about to combat them, yet he has been supposed to have derived an hereditary inclination to the study of physic from his Mother. She, however, died when he was young; and whatever may be said of this conjecture, his other attainments formed the basis of his character when living, and his Christianity alone remains of value to him now. That he regarded Christianity as infinitely superior to every branch of knowledge or science, is evident from his determination when resolved to pursue medicine for his livelihood; for even then he still intended to make Christianity the great employment of his life. The truth is, that his profound admiration of the Scriptures, as well as his delight in reading them, was owing to his father, a good man, having intended him for the ministry, in which he was himself engaged. *He* instructed him in grammar and the first elements of language, and the son continued under the father's eye and instructions until his fourteenth year. Boerhaave was distinguished as a botanist; and here also we recognize the influence of a Father; who, to preserve his but too delicate constitution, used to send him out into the fields, and employ him in rural occupations. His father wished to blend the active with the contemplative, and thus saved his son from those distempers and depressions which are too frequently the result of indiscreet diligence, and uninterrupted application to study.\*

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\* See the Life of Boerhaave, by Dr. Samuel Johnson,

SIR CHARLES LINNÆUS is universally known as the author of a revolution in the study of nature, by an entire new classification and nomenclature of her three principal kingdoms ; for, though his theory involved him in controversy with the most ingenious philosophers of the age, he finally received from them all, the profoundest testimonials of their conversion to his opinions, and their deference for his genius. Not less than three thousand letters, from celebrated persons of all nations, were found after his decease among his papers, expressive of the regard and admiration of the writers. The most brilliant period in the life of this ardent student of Nature, was spent at Upsal, in Sweden, where, amidst the beauties of one of the most flourishing botanic gardens in Europe, and daily improving it, he used to deliver lectures on his favorite pursuit. "The lectures, which had been, until the time of Linnæus, a mere matter of form, became, under the charms of his eloquence, a subject of national interest. The hall was crowded while he delivered them. His discourses embraced botany, natural history, the medicinal virtues of plants, the *materia medica*, and nosology. He made excursions in the summer, at the head of two hundred pupils, besides many foreigners and persons of distinction. They set out in small parties to explore the country ; and whenever any rare plant or natural curiosity was discovered, a signal was given with a horn or trumpet, when the whole corps joined their chief, to hear his demonstrations and remarks. They used to return with their hats adorned with flowers, and the sound of musical instruments. The inhabitants were always pleased to see them come back in this style of innocent triumph ; and to such delightful rambles, many of the young men were indebted at once for increasing their intellectual stores, and preserving them from the degrading and debasing haunts of dissipation and folly. At that time all the

young students of *divinity* were obliged to learn the elements of botany and domestic medicine, in order that they might be enabled to administer to the bodily afflictions of their flocks, in remote districts, where regular medical assistance might not be attainable in a moment of emergency; and the number of Linnæus's pupils and admirers was greatly increased in consequence of this wise and humane regulation."

The mind of Linnæus was not, however, to be confined even to the varied productions of his garden. Under him the first Royal Museums were established in Sweden; both the king and queen being devoted to the sciences in general, though above all to natural history. The king, therefore, caused every remarkable curiosity in the kingdom to be shown to Linnæus, in order that he might describe it from his own observation. Still the garden occupied him chiefly, and as a specimen of the ardor with which he pursued his studies, though in a declining state of health, I may mention the following:

"The seed of the *Lotus Ornithopodioides* had been sent to him by Professor De Sauvages from Montpellier. It prospered and bore two flowers. Delighted with them, he recommended them to the strictest care of the gardener; and two days after, returning home late in the evening, he immediately went into the garden to look at them, but they were not to be found. The next night he went again: they were still invisible. The next morning they appeared as usual; but the gardener thought they were fresh ones, as there was not any to be found the evening before. Linnæus pondered over the circumstance, and went again the same evening, intent on solving the mystery: they had again vanished; but, searching more closely for the fugitives than he had hitherto done, he at last found them closely folded up, and their leaves contracted over them. To a mind inquisitive as that of Linnæus's, this discovery was enough to awaken a new train of ideas. Intent on surprising Nature in her most secret operations, he might now be seen perambulating the garden, and the hot-houses, in the dead of the night, with a lantern in his hand; and constantly finding the vegetable creation in a dormant state, their flowers concealed, and their leaves contracted



round them, he formed his theory of the *sleep* of plants, and proved that it took place at regular intervals, like that of animals. This discovery enabled him likewise to form a vegetable time-piece, wherein the hours of the day were marked by the different periods at which certain flowers began to close their blossoms; and in the same manner he framed a rural calendar for the regulation of the labors of husbandry, according to the appearance of the blossom of plants at stated intervals.

“Such were the ingenious occupations with which Linnæus diversified his more assiduous studies, while the garden, and its varied productions, engaged the strength of his mind. ‘There,’ he said in a speech which he delivered from the professor’s chair, on the anniversary of the King of Sweden’s birth-day, in 1752; ‘there I receive and impart instruction! There I admire the wisdom of the Creator, which manifests itself in so many various modes; and there I demonstrate it to others.’”

The greatness of his mind will, however, not be understood, except it be observed when struggling for exertion under the pressure of poverty. At one period, “too honest to avail himself to any considerable degree of credit, which he might not be able to redeem, and too just to ask that farther assistance from his Father which he knew must injure the younger branches of his family, Linnæus submitted to the greatest privations with cheerfulness. His countrymen and fellow-students, admiring his genius and respecting his fortitude, frequently ministered to his wants, which were so urgent, that he was forced, not only often to accept a meal from their kindness, but was glad to recruit his wardrobe with their cast-off clothes. He could not even afford to pay a cobbler for mending the old shoes which he was constrained to accept of his companions, or to go barefooted on the excursions where, amidst the treasures and delights of nature, all recollections of his own difficulties and anxieties vanished like a painful dream. To have seen him lining his worn-out shoes, as he frequently did, with strong paper, and stitching the soles afresh, with thread formed

of the bark of trees, it would have appeared as if he actually must have taken up the humble occupation for which his Father had once designed him,—that of a shoemaker; but the mind that can bear, without complaint, the hardships of poverty, almost invariably extricates itself at last from its disadvantages.” So Linnæus lived to offer up his solemn thanks to God, in the Installation-speech which he made in 1741, when entering on his office of professor, for the sustaining mercy which had enabled him to bear up under the most trying circumstances of want and disappointment.

These few particulars, illustrative of the character and attainments of this extraordinary man, have been introduced, only with the view of directing the reader’s attention to the rise and origin of so much eminence in the delightful walk of Nature.

Charles Linnæus was born on the 13th of May, 1707, at Rashult, a village in the province of Smaland, in Sweden. “His ancestors were peasants; but, by gradual refinement in their ideas, being induced to leave the plough, they relinquished their original name with their primitive occupation; and, in conformity with a pleasing custom in Sweden, of choosing fresh appellations, on any particular occasion, from natural objects, took the name of Lindelius, Tiliander (Linden-tree-man), from a lofty Linden-tree, which stood, and continued to flourish, till within a few years, in the vicinity of their native place. The *Father* of Charles Linnæus was the pastor of the village; and, being passionately fond of gardening, he followed the example of his kindred, in borrowing from the same tree a name, which his son has rendered familiar to the ear in every quarter of the civilized globe. The love of plants and flowers in the elder Linnæus was increased by his obtaining, about a year after the birth of his son, the living of Stenbrohult, which had the advan-

tage of an extensive and good garden annexed to the house. This garden he soon rendered the finest in the whole district, enriching it with upwards of four hundred species of flowers, many of them of foreign growth and great rarity. Thus were the infant steps of young Linnaeus guided by his father's hand, amid

“Queen lilies, and the painted populace,  
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives.”

At eight years of age, he had a separate plot of ground assigned him by his Father, which was dignified with the name of “Charles's garden;” and many an excursion did he make to the neighboring woods and meadows, for plants and flowers, wild herbs and weeds, wherewith to increase its stores. He even colonized it with wild bees and wasps; but their hostile demeanor, threatening the safety of the paternal hives, and his poor weeds verifying the old proverb of thriving apace, he was forced occasionally to submit his little domain to the more discriminating eye and experienced hand of his Father.

The allotment of a piece of garden-ground to Charles was, however, rather an advanced step in the influence which his Father's love for nature had exercised over him. Before he was well out of his Mother's arms, this influence was observable; but the bent of his mind was first decidedly displayed on the following occasion. “He was scarcely four years of age, when he accompanied his Father one day to a feast at Mohlen; and, in the evening, it being a very pleasant season of the year, the guests seated themselves on some flowery turf, listening to the pastor, who made various remarks on the names and properties of the plants, showing them the roots of the *Succisa*, *Tormentilla*, *Orchides*, &c. The child paid the most uninterrupted attention to all he saw and heard, and from that hour never ceased harassing his Father

with questions about the name, the quality, and the nature of every plant he met with." Being so very young, the *names* of plants he found it most difficult to retain, so that his Father, submitting to far more than any instructor in natural history ever would, had to tell at many a call "the story ten times told." At last, in return for his informing his child of the name of any plant or flower, the Father exacted from him a promise that he would endeavor to *remember* it; and thus did he lay the foundation of that eminence to which his son arrived, who, whatever were his failings, certainly proved the most enthusiastic lover of nature, and the most indefatigable inquirer into her productions, that perhaps ever adorned the annals of that science.\*

PASCAL.—Pascal is generally regarded as an extraordinary character, inheriting from nature all the powers of genius. "He was a geometrician of the first rank, a profound reasoner, a sublime and elegant writer." Though oppressed by continual infirmities; not having passed a day without pain during twenty-one years of the thirty-nine that he lived; if we consider that "he invented a curious arithmetical machine, the elements of the calculation of chances, and the methods of resolving various problems respecting the cycloid; that he fixed the wavering opinions of the learned respecting the weight of the atmosphere; that he wrote one of the most perfect works existing in the French language; and that in his 'Thoughts' there are passages, the depth and beauty of which are incomparable; we can hardly believe that a greater genius ever existed in any age or nation. All those who had occasion to be with him in the ordinary

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\* See *Triumphs of Genius and Perseverance*, by Eliz. Strutt, 1826; and *Pulteney's View of the Writings of Linnæus, with Life*, by Dr. Maton, 1805.

commerce of the world; acknowledged his superiority; but it excited no envy against him, as he was never fond of showing it. His conversation instructed, without exciting, in those who heard it, a mortifying sense of their own inferiority; and he was remarkably indulgent towards the faults of others; excepting, that, as he was particularly careful to repress in himself the passion of self-love, he could with difficulty observe the marks of it in others without reproving them. On this subject he used to declare, "that a worthy man should avoid naming himself; that Christian piety annihilates the worldly *me*; and that worldly civility hides and suppresses it."\*

Now, as Pascal was the subject of such delicacy and disease, and lost his Mother when he was only three years old, we might never have heard of him, or read his writings, but for his amiable and judicious Father. This Father, an excellent scholar and able mathematician, who, during the short period of his married life, had been assisted by his amiable wife in the duties of educating their family, upon her decease determined to take upon himself the whole charge of his son's education, and that of two sisters, one older, and the other two years younger, than Pascal. In pursuance of this design, the duties of a public station, first President of the Court of Aids, he resigned in favor of his brother, and in 1631 removed to Paris. Books of every description being here easily procured, he determined that his son should enjoy every advantage which these could afford. He sent him to no college; but, at home, himself, instructed him in logic, natural philosophy, and other branches. When young Pascal had reached his 24th year, though his passion for mathematics remained, and would show itself occasionally, his attention was drawn to the subject of religion during

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\* Bossu.

the time, or immediately after an attack of paralysis, which deprived him for three months of the use of both his limbs. In process of time his impressions and researches terminating in an assured persuasion of the truth of Christianity, as revealed in Scripture, the last eight or ten years of his short life were spent in studying the sacred volume with profound delight. Some of the peculiarities of his church, as a Catholic, he might carry with him to the grave; but his "Thoughts on Religion" will continue to be read with pleasure and profit too by Christians of every denomination.

Little did his Father think, when removing to Paris, and afterwards watching over the education of his son with such laudable assiduity, that this son would one day more than repay him for all his kindness; but so it was. The influence of Pascal's religious principles and character was very powerful. It prevailed with many, and was most affectingly acknowledged even by his beloved Parent. That same Father, who had been so bent on unfolding to his Child the ample field of literary and scientific knowledge, at last overcome by the still more powerful influence which divine truth had produced on the soul of his Child, was to be seen sitting at the feet of the very youth he had himself alone educated. Living consistently too, he at last died a truly Christian death, about eleven years before this extraordinary man, his son, fell asleep in Jesus.

COWPER.—Although beneficial influence on the public mind were not allowed to constitute one proof of a great and good man, fond partiality, arising out of great personal obligation to his writings, will not allow me to omit one other individual, by far the most useful of our poets, whether ancient or modern,—the amiable and immortal Cowper. Seldom has the power of maternal tenderness

been so illustrated as in his experience. Little did his Mother imagine, when wrapping up her Child in his little scarlet mantle, and sending him off so carefully to school, or when paying her nightly visits to his chamber, to see him safe and warmly laid, that all this would be remembered distinctly, and *so* celebrated, at the distance of more than half a century : little did she imagine that her very countenance, her manners, and treatment, would make impressions, such as all the dark scenes and mental depressions of many years should not be able to efface ! But what says the Poet ?

“ 'Tis now become a hist'ry little known,  
 That once we call'd the past'ral house our own.  
 Short-lived possession ! but the record fair,  
 That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,  
 Still outlives many a storm that has effaced  
 A thousand other themes less deeply traced.  
 Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
 That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid ;  
 Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,  
 The biscuit or confectionary plum ;  
 The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd  
 By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd :  
 All this, and more endearing still than all,  
 Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall ;  
 Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,  
 That humor interposed too often makes :  
 All this still legible in mem'ry's page,  
 And still to be so till my latest age,  
 Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay  
 Such honors to thee as my numbers may ;  
 Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,  
 Not scorn'd in heav'n, though little noticed here.”

This interesting woman, his Mother, was descended through the families of Hipposley of Thoroughly, in Sussex, and Pellet of Bolney, in the same county, from the several noble houses of West, Knollys, Carey, Buller, Howard, and Mowbray ; and so by four different lines from Henry

the Third, king of England. Distinctions of this nature can shed no additional lustre on the memory of Cowper; they are mentioned merely with a view to the introduction of the following lines, from the same poem:

“My boast is not, that I deduce my birth  
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;  
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—  
The Son of Parents pass'd into the skies.”

Before obtaining his Mother's picture, the occasion, it is well known, of these beautiful lines, Cowper used to dwell with great pleasure on her memory, and, immediately after receiving it, he addressed a letter to the donor, his cousin, Mrs. Bodham, in which he says—

“The world could not have furnished you with a present so acceptable to me as the picture you have so kindly sent me. I received it the night before last, and viewed it with a trepidation of nerves and spirits somewhat akin to what I should have felt, had the dear original presented herself to my embraces. I kissed it, and hung it, where it is the last object that I see at night, and, of course, the first on which I open my eyes in the morning. She died when I completed my sixth year; yet I remember her well, and am an ocular witness of the great fidelity of the copy. I remember, too, a multitude of the maternal tendernesses which I received from her, and which have endeared her memory to me beyond expression. There is in me, I believe, more of the *Donne* than of the *Cowper*, and though I love both names, and have a thousand reasons to love those of my own name, yet I feel the bond of nature draw me vehemently to your side. I was thought, in the days of my childhood, much to resemble my mother; and, in my natural temper, of which, at the age of fifty-eight, I must be supposed a competent judge, can trace both her, and my late uncle, your Father: somewhat of his irritability, and a little, I would hope, both of his and her —, I know not what to call it, without seeming to praise myself, which is not my intention, but, speaking to *you*, I will speak out, and say, *good nature*. Add to all this, I deal much in poetry, as did our venerable ancestor, the Dean of St. Paul's (his Mother, too, he might have added, who, if not a poetess, was fond of poetry), and I think I shall have proved myself a *Donne* at all points.” To



another relative, about the same time, he says,—The portrait “I had rather possess than the richest jewel in the British crown : for I loved her with an affection, that her death, fifty-two years ago, has not in the least abated. I remember, too, young as I was when she died, well enough to know, that it is a very exact resemblance of her, and as such it is to me invaluable.”

Cowper’s case is one most affecting proof of the amount of loss sustained in the removal of such a Mother. Witness what happened immediately afterwards. Though much of his distress is to be referred, unquestionably, to physical causes, and the mistaken treatment of early disease, long, long before the alienation of his mind,\* yet had she survived to train this tender plant, many a gloomy hour, and day, and year, might, humanly speaking, have been averted. At all events, one is pained in being obliged to ascribe so much of what followed to some sad oversight or mistake in tender and considerate training, during the rest of his boyhood ; while it is pleasing to observe, that these first six years of existence afforded even to him a subject of frequent delightful reminiscence during his whole life.

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To extend this list of eminent men, so peculiarly indebted to parental influence, would not be difficult ; but when the names of Fenelon or Locke, of Huss or Junius, of Latimer or Jeremy Taylor, of Baxter or Flavel, of

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\* Between mind and body there is such an intimate connection, that, in many cases, the state of the individual may be conjectured. So, when Cowper was depressed, or under alienation of mind, his health, in general, was good ; when unwell, his mind was better and comparatively easy. Indeed, as to its physical cause, the mental obliquity of this amiable man, it is now well known, was owing to his having, in very early life, unadvisedly checked an erisipelatous complaint in the face, which rendered him ever afterwards liable to depression of spirits.

Romaine or Chandler, are mentioned, let it not be forgotten how much we stand indebted to the *Father* of each. When Augustine or Luther, Lord Bacon or Bishop Hall, George Herbert or Halyburton, Hervey or Colonel Gardiner, Doddridge or Cecil, Swartz or Brainerd, are thought of with gratitude or admiration, let their amiable and interesting *Mothers* be also remembered, to whom, in a greater or less degree, they owed the rise and origin of all their future eminence. In almost all these cases, it is by no means intended to exclude the other Parent, who either assisted or sanctioned all that was done, when that parent survived; but to *both Parents* we are equally under obligation for John Howe and Jonathan Edwards, Witsius and Grotius, Bates and Henry, Watts and Dwight; for the family of Collins, mentioned by Fox in his Acts and Monuments, as well as the Mathers, and Cottons, and Mayhews, of North America. Nay, when deprived of the advantage of both parents, it is often to some other *relative* that we trace the early training of the mind, or the direction given to the genius of the Child. By his Grandfather, Melancthon was instructed; Beza and Ridley were indebted to their Uncles; while Archbishop Usher was trained up from infancy by his two Aunts, though they were born blind! Both persons of great piety, as well as of a remarkable knowledge of Sacred Scripture, they actually taught him to read, and until he was eight years old, he remained under their tuition alone.

Proof being now not so much my object as *impression*, and as the minds of Parents in general seem to be far from sufficiently alive to the power thus lodged in their hands, until it is too late, I hope I may be excused in noticing, though very briefly, a few of these names.

RICHARD BAXTER, the English Demosthenes, though at one period likely to prove only a grief to his Parents,

at last reached the eminence on which he now stands. Fortunately for him, his Father directed his attention to the historical parts of the Bible, which much interested him, and inspired him with a desire to peruse the whole. In consequence of this desire, the perusal of other books, and the *conversations* of his Father, his mind was enlightened; for these were, to say the least, among the means employed for his cordial reception of divine truth. And though this extraordinary character often lamented that, with him, "childhood and youth had too much vanity," he never forgot how greatly he had been indebted to the restraining power of parental instruction and example. Hence, even in old age, he published the sense he still entertained of his obligations to these divinely-appointed guardians of his infancy. Among his homely "poetical fragments," we find him referring to his Father and Mother in the following lines :

"My Parents here thy skilful hand did plant,  
 Free from the snares of riches and of want.  
 Their tender care was used for me alone,  
 Because thy providence gave to them but one ;  
 Their early precepts so possessed my heart,  
 That taking root, they did not thence depart.  
 Thy wisdom so contrived my education,  
 As might expose me to the least temptation.  
 Much of that guilt thy mercy did prevent,  
 In which my spring-time I should else have spent."

HALL, Bishop of Norwich, the English Seneca, not only felt himself, throughout life, under singular obligation to his Mother, but, if eloquent at any time, it was when referring to her. "How often," says he, "have I blessed the memory of those divine passages of experimental divinity which I have heard from her mouth! Never any lips have read to me such feeling lectures of piety ; neither have I known any soul that more accurately practised them than her own. Shortly, for I can hardly take

off my pen from so exemplary a subject, her life and death were saint-like."

**DR. DODDRIDGE.**—A Bohemian female, the daughter of a worthy minister, who had been compelled to forsake his native country, in consequence of persecution, took refuge in Britain, and so she became the Mother of this excellent and useful man. Nor was this the only notable circumstance in regard to his origin: Dr. Doddridge having been the twentieth child, and the only surviving Son of his Mother. As the children, with the exception of one daughter, had all died in infancy, young Doddridge had been actually laid aside as dead soon after his birth; but some motion being observed, and having been nursed with great care, his earliest years were consecrated, by both his Parents, to the acquisition of religious knowledge; nay, before he could read, the history of the Old and New Testament his Mother taught him, by means of some Dutch tiles, in the chimney-corner of the room where they resided. On these histories she was in the habit of making her own judicious reflections to the little child; and thus impressions were made on his mind, which subsequent years never could obliterate. In his thirteenth year he was deprived, by death, of his Father, and soon after of his affectionate Mother, of both of whom he always spoke in terms of the greatest respect and affection. Hence, in his own character as a Parent, we see their influence extended and improved. Not only was he an affectionate husband to an affectionate and pious wife, but to the education of his children he paid great attention; and their moral and religious characters he endeavored to form and improve, by example as well as precept.

**JONATHAN EDWARDS** of America, the only brother of ten sisters, the Child of Parents eminently pious, was

greatly indebted to them in his earliest years; and what is singular, he could distinctly look back on his own progenitors, in a regular chain, to his great-great Grandfather, a minister in London, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The family of his Mother (a singular woman, who, surviving him, died at the age of 90), was equally distinguished for their Christianity and attention to family religion. When Jonathan Edwards, therefore, is admired as a prodigy in the religious or metaphysical world, and well he may, he cannot be regarded as we do a lily among thorns, or, to use another Scripture metaphor, "as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood." He appears before us as the offspring of an extended line of pious ancestors, and as especially indebted to his immediate Parents; as well as the spring-head of a posterity who yet survive to benefit and bless the world; for the Parent of the Mother of President Dwight must again be noticed.

DR. DWIGHT, another character, but recently deceased, is a name with which the reader is doubtless familiar. His Mother "possessed uncommon powers of mind, and, for the extent and variety of her knowledge, has rarely been exceeded by any of her sex in this country (America.) Though married at an early age, and a Mother at eighteen, she found time, without neglecting the ordinary cares of her family, to devote herself, with the most assiduous attention, to the instruction of this Son, and her numerous family of children, as they successively claimed her regard. Perhaps few instances can be found, in which this great duty has been performed, with more scrupulous fidelity than in the case now under consideration. With a mind originally vigorous and discriminating, she had been accustomed, from infancy, to the conversation of men of literature, who resorted, in great numbers, to her

Father's house, and thus was forcibly taught the importance of that learning, the effects of which she had so often had opportunity to witness. It was a maxim with her, the soundness of which her own observation through life fully confirmed, that children generally lose several years, in consequence of being considered too young to be taught. She pursued a different course with her Son: she began to instruct him almost as soon as he was able to speak; and such was his eagerness, as well as his capacity for improvement, that, before he was four years old, he was able to read the Bible with ease and correctness."—"With the benefit of his Father's example constantly before him, enforced and recommended by the precepts of his Mother, he was sedulously instructed in the doctrines of religion, as well as the whole circle of moral duties. She taught him from the very dawn of reason to fear God; to be conscientiously just and kind: affectionate, and charitable, and forgiving; to preserve, on all occasions, and under all circumstances, the most sacred regard to truth; to relieve the distresses and supply the wants of the poor and unfortunate. She aimed, at a very early period, to enlighten his conscience; to make him afraid of sin; and taught him to hope for pardon *only* through the righteousness of Christ. The impressions thus made were *never* effaced."

"A great proportion of the instruction which he received, before he arrived at the age of six years, was at home with his Mother. Her school-room was her nursery. Here he had his regular hours for study as in a school; and twice every day she heard him repeat his lesson: here, in addition to his stated task, he watched the cradle of his younger brothers. When his lesson was recited, he was permitted to read such books as he chose. Being previously familiar with the historical parts of the Bible, his Mother turned his attention to Josephus and Prideaux,

and the more modern history of the Jews. After this he read Rollin and Hooke; the histories of Greece and England; the history of New England, and their wars with the Indians. All his knowledge, in short, both of grammar, and geography, and history, was thus acquired; and few persons have a more *accurate* acquaintance with either than he had. This domestic education rendered him fond of home, and of the company of his Parents, and saved him from the school-boy coarseness and effrontery. His Father being particularly fond of the society of men of education and intelligence, they were to the Son most welcome, and their conversations with his Father excited in him the first desires after excellence and eminence of character." His story need not be further pursued: suffice it to add, that, until his twelfth year, his education was conducted under the roof of Parents, to whom he was so much and so deservedly attached.

It is remarkable, that Dr. Dwight was no less favored than President Edwards with regard to his progenitors. The first ancestors of his Father's family in America came from Dedham in England, and settled in Massachusetts in 1637. From him Dwight was descended in the oldest male line; and he was able to refer to each individual in that line, including five generations, and reflect, that he was not only a member of the church of Christ, but had a fair reputation for piety.

RICHARD CECIL of London, when but a young man, had pursued a bold and determined career, till sunk in sin, hardening himself in infidelity, and instilling the same principles into others, there seemed no prospect of any change. His excellent Mother, however, had performed her part, and still remembered that it was good, not only to pray always, but not to faint, or desist upon any account.

At last, one night he lay contemplating the case of his Mother :

“I see,” said he within himself, “two unquestionable facts : first, My mother is greatly afflicted in circumstances, body, and mind ; and yet I see that she cheerfully bears up under all, by the support she derives from constantly repairing to her closet and her Bible ; secondly, That she has a secret spring of comfort, of which I know nothing ; while I, who give an unbounded loose to my appetites, and seek pleasure by every means, seldom or ever find it. If, however, there is such a secret in religion, why may I not find it as well as my Mother ?”—He instantly rose and began to pray, but was soon damped, by recollecting that much of his Mother’s comfort seemed to arise from her faith in Christ. Now, thought he, “this Christ I have ridiculed : He stands much in my way, and can form no part of my prayers.”—In utter confusion he lay down again ; but, in process of time, conviction of sin continuing, his difficulties were gradually removed, his objections answered. He now listened to those admonitions of his Mother, which he had before affected to receive with pride and scorn ; yet they had fixed themselves in his heart like a barbed arrow ; and though the effects were concealed from her observation, yet tears would fall from his eyes, as he passed along the street, from the impression she had made on his mind. Now he would discourse with her, and hear her without outrage, which revived her hopes, especially as he then attended the public worship of God. Thus he made some progress, but felt no small difficulty in separating from his favorite connections. Light, however, broke into his mind, till at last he discovered that Christ Jesus, so far from “standing in the way,” as he once thought, was indeed *the way, the truth, and the life*, to all who come unto God by Him.”

After such a change, it is not wonderful that Mr. Cecil should have written and spoken with so much pathos on the influence of the parental character. “Where parental influence does not convert,” he would say, “it hammers : it hangs on the wheels of evil. I had a pious Mother who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them ; I was a professed infidel : but then I liked to be an infidel in company, rather than when alone : I was wretched when by myself. These principles, and maxims, and data, spoiled my jollity.” Again he says,—“I find



in myself another evidence of the greatness of parental influence. I detect myself, to this day, in laying down maxims in my family, which I took up at three or four years of age, before I could possibly know the reason of them.”—“Besides, parental influence must be great, because God has said it shall be so. The Parent is not to stand reasoning and calculating. God has said, that his character *shall* have influence: and so this *appointment* of Providence becomes often the punishment of a wicked man. Such a man is a complete *selfist*. I am weary of hearing such men talk about their ‘family’—and their ‘family’—they ‘must provide for their family.’ Their family has no place in their real regard; they push for themselves. But God says,—‘No! you think your children shall be so and so; but they shall be rods for your own backs. They shall be your curse. They shall rise up against you.’ The most common of all human complaints is,—Parents groaning under the vices of their children! *This* is all the effect of parental influence.”

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The female character, on which so much depends, and which, unquestionably, has never risen to its greatest power and perfection, save when formed under the domestic roof, the reader may have observed, has been kept in view throughout. Could the eminent Mothers, already mentioned, be traced to their respective homes in early life, there we should find the secret of that powerful sway which they maintained over their own children with so much advantage. The lustre of that example, to which the walls of their Husband’s dwelling bore such witness, had before then, in most instances, if not in all, proved the joy of a Father’s or a Mother’s heart. Still it would be unpardonable, and a great defect, not to give a few

distinct additional instances, proving that the same law holds good in their experience, and that they also are witnesses to the power of parental influence. A few of our most eminent female characters must therefore be noticed.

LADY RACHEL RUSSEL will ever be held in admiration, not merely for her fortitude under so many years of trial and sorrow, but her fine talents, applied with so much care in the education of her bereaved children. But then she was the daughter of the Earl of Southampton, a man who, to the best of his judgment, without deviation, pursued, in difficult and evil days, the public good, and, at the same time, had been most careful of her education. In this care her Mother united, the branch of a French Protestant family, distinguished for the best of principles. It was her Mother's brother who was deputy-general of the reformed churches in France, and who pled strongly, at a full audience before Louis XIV., though in vain, in favor of toleration.

LADY BACON.—The Mother of Lord Bacon has been referred to: the woman who, during the early periods of childhood and youth, when the temper is most susceptible, and the first habits are acquired, instilled into his infant mind the rudiments and principles of science, and awakened the spirit of liberal curiosity in that gigantic mind. But then she had been carefully educated under her Father's eye, along with her sister, who married Lord Burleigh. Indeed she was but one of four sisters equally distinguished for erudition. They were the four daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke; he had paid scrupulous attention to their training-up in youth, and was the man who was selected for preceptor to the English Josiah, King Edward VI., who ever held him in the highest esteem; while this

daughter, Lady Bacon, had so profited under her Father's roof, that, from her superior endowments and irreproachable manners, she was appointed governess to that interesting prince.

Mrs. LUCY HUTCHISON has been justly admired as having written one of our most interesting pieces of biography, the Life of her Husband, Colonel Hutchison. She was, no doubt, highly accomplished; but, in such times especially, what had she been if her Parents had neglected their duty? After celebrating the land of her birth, "the next blessing," she says, "I have to consider in my nativity, is my Parents, both of them pious and careful instructors of my youth, both by precept and example." They are afterwards represented as applying all their cares, and sparing no cost, to improve her mind; and to conclude, she says,—“It pleased God, that, through the good instructions of my Mother, and the sermons she carried me to, I was convinced that the knowledge of God was the most excellent study, and accordingly applied myself to it, and to practise as I was taught.”

Mrs. ELIZABETH ROWE imbibed from her Parents her religious principles; her Father having been at great pains in the cultivation of her mind, was ably assisted by her Mother, an eminent Christian, who had first become acquainted with her Father when he was unjustly confined in Ilchester jail for nonconformity. “My infant hands,” she says, “were early lifted up to Thee, and I soon learned to know and acknowledge the God of my Fathers.” For her relatives, whether of her own or her husband's family, she entertained the warmest affection; and she was laid at last, according to request, in her Father's grave.

MRS. CECIL has been already referred to; but then she was the link in a chain of pious ancestors: and many preceding generations in her family having walked in the fear of God, the united influence of their example was daily before her mind.

MRS. DWIGHT, and her manner of proceeding in the education of her children, have perhaps been admired by the reader; but no wonder that she was such a woman, being the daughter of *such* a Father—Jonathan Edwards of America; a man who entertained the finest sentiments respecting Family order and government. The man who said on one occasion,—“We have had great disputes how the Church ought to be regulated; but the due regulation of your families is of no less, and, in some respects, of much greater importance. Every Christian family ought to be as it were a little church, consecrated to Christ, and wholly influenced and governed by his rules. Family education and order are some of the chief of the means of grace. If these fail, all other means are likely to prove ineffectual: if these are duly maintained, all the means of grace will be likely to prosper and be successful. Let me now, therefore, once more repeat the counsel which I have often urged on the heads of families, to great painfulness in teaching, warning, and directing their children; bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; beginning early where there is yet opportunity; and maintaining a constant diligence in labors of this kind. Remember, that as ye would not have all your instructions and counsels ineffectual, there must be *government* as well as instructions, which must be maintained with an even hand and steady resolution, as a guard to the religion and morals of the family, and the support of its good order.—Take heed that it be not with any of you as it was with Eli of old, who reprov- ed his

children, but *restrained* them not; and that by this means you do not bring the like curse on your families that he did on his.

“And let Children obey their Parents, and yield to their instructions, and submit to their orders, as they would inherit a blessing and not a curse; for we have reason to think, from many things in the word of God, that nothing has a greater tendency to bring a curse on persons in this world, and on all their temporal concerns, than an undutiful, unsubmitive, disorderly behavior in Children towards their Parents.”

MISS ELIZABETH SMITH has been regarded as a young woman of great attainments; but during her childhood and youth she was not neglected. Indeed she does not seem to have there enjoyed any uncommon or peculiar advantages, except in the conversation and instructions of her Mother, who appears, from some of her letters, to have possessed an elegant and cultivated understanding.

MISS BACON.—Of this lady, the eldest daughter of John Bacon, Esq., R. A., her brother has said,—“I have no hesitation in believing, that, had she been otherwise educated, she would have become a willing subject for the gayest scenes of the fashionable world.” This is the testimony of a Son to his Father’s conduct; and as for her Mother, who died when Miss Bacon was thirteen years old, he says,—“when on her death-bed, among the petitions which she frequently and fervently repeated on behalf of her children, one was, that they might be kept from the evils of the world; a prayer which was not uttered in vain in the experience of my sister.”

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It is, I am aware, a common observation, that all great men and women have discovered, even in childhood, some remarkable trait of character; but then who is it, I ask, that feel in this the deepest interest, and who have the most powerful influence in not only bringing this forward to maturity, but in giving it a good or an honorable and useful direction? Does it not now *appear* to be the Parents? The fewer the talents which either you or your Children possess, the less will you have to account for; but is God not resolved to take as strict account of the *one* talent as of the ten? I wish the reader, however, to look back even on these instances, and observe whether the object in general was not to implant *principle*, nay and *Christian principle*, rather than to furnish their Children with the means of becoming *eminent* in this world; and I have also to remind my reader, that the hands and hearts of these Parents were often cold in the dust, long before their dear Children reached that eminence in point of mind or extent of influence, which we now admire. At their full growth, they did not live to see them; but they have left us an example which, when its consequences are observed, we shall do well to follow.

After all, however, the question is not so much, who or what were these men and women, but *what would* they have been without their Parents' example and counsel, their care and constancy? And it is indeed a most consoling reflection, that while there have been powerful minds, eminent chiefly for infidelity and mischief, and who seem as though they had labored under, what has been called, a black inspiration; while I believe that the Parents might have checked and crushed much evil in the bud, certainly they do not appear on the page of history, as in the striking examples of an opposite character, to be the immediate nurses or prompters in early life; much less were they the advisers to the sad infidelity of

mature age. Let an equal number of persons, equally eminent for mere talent, be produced, who had rejected the Sacred Scriptures professedly (though in all such cases without serious examination), and it will, I suspect, be found, that they were as distinguished for disobedience and self-will, or for impatience of parental authority, as the instances now adduced were for the opposite qualities. Take four of the most eminent of these men, without naming them, as a specimen: it will be found that the Mother of one died young, and his education was neglected by his Father; another incurred his Father's displeasure; the third acted directly contrary to his Father's will and intentions; while the fourth individual of the same sad school, on being asked if he wished his relatives, or children, and servants, to adopt his opinions, is reported to have either declined an answer, or replied in the negative. No, these unhappy men, who have been pre-eminent for infidelity, in many, if not in most cases, had forsaken, so far at least, the earthly, but divinely-appointed guide of their youth. They had not, in their skepticism at least, asked their Father's advice and concurrence; and so, in the wane of life, wearied in the greatness of a way which they had marked out for themselves, their last years have generally exhibited a melancholy and miserable destitution of all the tender charities of the human heart. Where is the man, distinguished for skepticism or deism, who can point to his Father and his Grandfather as having been precisely of *his* sentiments? And how has it often fared with their posterity? Where are the children's children of these men, and these walking in the steps of their fathers? History, in kindness to mankind, may attempt to draw a veil over them, but there is an unalterable determination of Heaven upon record which explains the whole:—  
"The memory of the wicked shall rot."

On the other hand, there are instances occurring daily, as to Christianity, in which the child can look up to the God of his Father, and his Father's Father; nay, in various cases, the individual has been favored to look back to three, and four, and even five generations, and reflect that his progenitors, in regular succession, are now all met in glory everlasting, as the gracious effect of their *unity* in the Christian faith. One case has been already quoted, and that no mean man, who could look back on four, and another who could look back on six. This last (Dr. Dwight) left behind him, in America, six sons, each of whom, if Christians, are at this moment able to look back on seven!

The eminent worthies of North America stand on very high ground for such accounts of their ancestry. There was but little to interest such men in the woods and wilds around them; and being, in many instances, men of learning and erudition, and compelled happily to look into the bosom of their families for all their hopes and comfort, they and their posterity as often looked back on the Parents, to whom they were naturally and almost solely indebted. The same striking peculiarity appeared in our own country, during the Augustan age, of Howe, and Owen, and Bates; but were consistent Christians, in any age, to read the book of Providence, and hand it down to their posterity, the same law, measure for measure, will be found to hold good; and if duty *is* done, such genealogies will not be lost;

“There is a book  
By angels writ, with beams of heavenly light,  
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,  
A chronicle of actions bright and fair.”

In his own palace of uncreated day, the genealogies of Christian families will be more clearly seen; and many a



golden chain will then appear, as the bright reward of parental piety and prayer, parental consistency and judicious training.

It is indeed very true, that the gospel, in the course of its progress, makes strange circuits, and seizes on characters who were in every sense "out of the way;" but these instances of divine mercy, while they furnish reason for "glorifying God in them," as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, are among the secret and sovereign things which belong to God; not the revealed, which belong to us, and to our children after us. Never can these cases furnish a *rule of conduct*; and wo to that Parent who turns them into a pillow of presumption, with reference to his family.

It is also still true, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him who runneth, but of God who showeth mercy;" but before the reader has finished these pages, it is presumed he will agree with the writer in believing, that this God, who showeth mercy, and delights in it, at the same time delights that his mercy should run in the channel of consistent family conduct and character: and, oh, how affecting and deeply interesting is the contemplation of the divine favor, when it so runs, in consequence of Parents having fulfilled their part! So it seems Paul thought when he said,—"I thank God, whom I serve, from my forefathers, with pure conscience, that, without ceasing, I have remembrance of thee in my prayers, night and day, greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy." And at what time was he especially *so* affected? Hear himself. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt, first, in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." The apostle seems to have regarded this young man, as not only possessing, in himself, a strong claim on his affection, but one of the highest hereditary titles to his

regard. Since Paul lived, how often has the same emotion recurred! How many, since then, have often said—

The sweet remembrance of the just,  
Like a green root, revives and bears  
A train of blessings for their heirs,  
When dying Nature sleeps in dust!

Having proceeded thus far, if the reader now desires to see the parental power of Parents in its proper light, let him unite all these characters in one view, with many others which might have been mentioned, and then ask, What would the world have been *without* these men? Yet, when he sees them all become great and eminently useful characters, and some of them, from the humblest vale of life, rise to the highest stations of human society in every department, themselves bearing witness, he hears the highest among them refer to others as the original cause; so gratefully remembered; and these, they say, under God, were their Parents.

*Third*, THE POWER INHERENT IN THE DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION TO FORM AND IMPROVE THE CHARACTER OF SERVANTS.

Whether we are conscientious in the performance of duty or not, it will ever be found that, in exact proportion as we obtain power or authority over others, our responsibility to God of necessity extends; our duties multiply. There is therefore no degree of paradox in the saying of Marovaux,—“He whom we call a servant is perhaps least a servant of the whole band of menials.” The truth of this saying is not affected by any superiority with which a master is invested; for he also is a man under authority—he also has a Master in heaven! And what though the violation of his obligations may not come within the scope of human legislation, or the party wronged may

prove defenceless? Such violations are only postponed for investigation by Him who holds the scales of universal and impartial justice. Witness the sense of obligation expressed by a master, one of the most ancient to whom we can refer. "If I did despise the cause of my manservant or my maid-servant, when they contended with me, what shall I say when God riseth up? and when he riseth, what shall I answer him?"\* Nor are warnings withheld of such a visitation. "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of the strangers that are in thy land, within thy gates: *at his day* thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."†—"Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."‡ But oh, how much more serious and pregnant with misery is the account to be rendered by a master or mistress, if a domestic servant can say of a whole family, "No one cared for my soul!"

The truth is, that, although master and servant are both members of one family, the distinction between them, though not founded in nature, is an arrangement of Providence; and, like every such arrangement, provision has been made by its Author for the harmonious procedure of both parties. This provision is conspicuous in the duties incumbent on each. Thus, if, instead of contempt, or disdain, or indifference, the relationship of master involves not only civility, but condescension and kindness; nay, as has been already proved, if the master's duty extend to the soul of a servant, one cannot conceive

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\* Job xxxi. 13, 14. † Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. ‡ James v. 4.

of any school, for the improvement and formation of a servant's character, to be compared with it.

Thus it was that Abraham's feeling of responsibility, extending as it did beyond his children; he who had such a son as Isaac, had also for his servant such a man as Eliezer of Damascus. What an admirable servant he was, God himself has taken care to show. How diligent, and how faithful! Him his master could trust with all that he possessed, rich as he was; him he could employ, with full confidence, in matters which involved the future peace of his family, and on which must turn the fulfilment of the great promise of God. Nay, this Abraham could do in a matter which was intended to cut off Eliezer for ever from being heir to his master's property! Nor did he employ him in vain. His faith and fidelity, his humility and prudence, were the means, under God, of securing the highest wishes of his Master. Yet, in all this, we see nothing more than a return for benefits received. To his Master, this man was indebted for every thing, and especially for his knowledge of true religion: for more than sixty years had this his oldest servant remained under his care: often had he listened to the instructions of his venerable Master, while the whole conduct of Eliezer proves that he had listened not in vain. If these two instances of Son and Servant are found in one family, where the character of its head is so distinctly drawn, to what purpose is it, if not to excite the Master and Parent of succeeding ages to the religious care of their *entire* household?

When this venerable Servant of Abraham succeeded in procuring Rebecca, he brought with her a female, in the capacity of nurse, of whom most honorable mention is made afterwards, on occasion of her decease. This woman stands on record as a proof of the great extent to which even a Servant may carry her influence and char-

acter, *as a Servant*. The length of time which she remained in the family, and the degree to which she engaged the affections there, are alike remarkable. As this nurse was present when Isaac and Rebecca first met, so she was still in the family, twenty years afterwards, when Jacob was born; and him she had no doubt attended from infancy upwards. In him, too, it should seem she had felt an interest, and to him, in her old age, she had transferred so much of her confidence and affection, that, after the death of her mistress, she removed, and died in his family. For more than a hundred years she had lived under the eye and care of Isaac, and now, at the advanced age of about one hundred and eighty, she is interred in a place of safety and honor, under the shade of an oak, near Bethel. "But Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, died, and she was buried beneath Bethel, under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth."

"Jacob, it is presumed, must have gone and visited his father; and finding his mother dead, and her nurse far advanced in years, more fit to be nursed herself than to be of any use to her aged Master, he took her home, where she would meet with kind attentions from her younger country-women; and probably Jacob furnished his father with another more suitable in her place. Nothing is said of her from the time she left Padan-aram with her young mistress; but, by the honorable mention that is here made of her, she seems to have been a worthy character. The death of an aged servant, when her work was done, would not ordinarily excite much regret. To have afforded her a decent burial was all that, in most cases, would be thought of: but Jacob's family were so much affected by the event as not only to weep over her grave, but to call the very tree under the shadow of which she was interred, "Allon-bachuth"—*the oak of weeping*. It is the more singular, too, that the family who wept

over her was not that in which she had lived, in what we should call her best days, but one that had merely taken her under their care in her old age.”\*

Now, the eminence of this Servant’s character must not be viewed apart from the two families, father and son, in which she served, since her descending to the grave was felt by the whole circle to be the falling of an ancient family branch. In both families she had unquestionably shown deep interest: but then, in each, there was much that was calculated to influence and attach, and in each not only a powerful preservative from the contagion of idolatry and immorality, but in these families she saw the stream of the Divine favor, and fell in with the stream. It is also worthy of remark, that the text seems to lay an emphasis upon these words,—“Rebecca’s nurse;” and it is not improbable, that the sorrow expressed at her interment was not only on account of her character as a woman, but her office, and the manner in which she had acquitted herself in it. “The sight of the daughter of Laban, his mother’s *brother*, and even of his *sheep*, had interested Jacob’s heart, much more would the burial of her *nurse*. In weeping over her grave, he would seem to be weeping over that of his beloved parent, and paying that tribute of affection to her memory which Providence had denied him at the time of her decease.”†

The proper sphere and just value of a domestic Servant is indeed very apt to be underrated, and even overlooked; though, among the relative characters in a family, it stands peculiarly exposed to the plastic power of treatment and circumstances. But surely the eminent instances quoted would seem to warn us against such oversight? Nor are these the only two which might here be adduced. Several of the most interesting characters recorded in Scripture were nothing more than Servants, or even slaves; and the

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\* Fuller on Genesis.

† Ibid.

Divine regard for them, though placed in one of the humblest vales of human life, is very conspicuous. Witness Ebedmelech, the Ethiopian, and the little maid in the land of Syria, in the Old Testament; or the Servant of the Roman centurion, and Onesimus, the servant of Philemon, in the New. The first has a message sent to him from God himself, by the mouth of a prophet; and, while the children of the king, his master, were slain in the royal presence,—nay, the eyes of that king are put out, and he is bound with chains to be carried to Babylon,—Ebedmelech's very fears are anticipated, and he is assured of perfect security from every danger. In regard to the second, such is her weight of character, even in youth, that she is honored to send the great man, her master, into Judea, where, though there were many lepers, unto none of them was Elias sent, but to this individual whom the little maid advised. In regard to the centurion's Servant, the Saviour of the world wrought upon him one of his most illustrious miracles—curing him at a distance, without seeing him, in consequence of the strong faith of his Master, and the deep interest which he discovered in this his domestic servant. And as for Onesimus, the Holy Spirit inspired an apostle to write a letter respecting him, which now forms an interesting part of the Sacred Canon, as well as a perfect model of ancient epistolary correspondence.

These cases, I grant, are not equally illustrative of our present subject. Two of them we can trace only to the influence of religion generally on the minds of Servants. But the character of Philemon, though lost for a time on the heart of Onesimus, must have been one prevailing motive with him in complying with Paul's desire that he should return. And as for the Roman Centurion, whose uncommon interest in his Servant displays the weight and value of that Servant's character, he had lived down even Jewish prejudice, made the hearts of the Jews yearn over

his family distress, and secured even from them at least one instance of earnest application to the Saviour for relief; while he himself had received the Messiah in a way which excelled all that Jesus had ever beheld, even in Israel! "Verily," he said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel!" Thus we see the most eminent Servants are found in the most eminent families, while their excellency of character throws an additional light on that of their Master. When the reader has cast his eye over society in general, he will find this rule hold good, though it may have exceptions. These exceptions, however, continue only for a season: the constitution of such a family will right itself, and must throw off in a short time what is incompatible with its vital interests.

Let a Servant once enter the threshold of a well-regulated family, not only are habits and manner corrected, but ignorance is removed, and in some instances too, where the Servant is not a little indisposed to improvement. Example is more powerful than precept, and the example of a Master or Mistress must operate. The exercise of parental love, the exhibition of parental authority, and the judicious training of children, are not witnessed without some influence on a Servant's character. The exercise of daily family devotion insinuates certain ideas into the mind,—meanwhile it restrains, and many times, if short and plain, tender and heavenly, by slow but certain degrees, it may assist in turning from darkness to light: at all events, it enables this Servant to appreciate the purpose of God in a standing ministry, while it stimulates the attention, probes the conscience, and helps the party to comprehend the meaning, as well as follow the drift, of a public expositor. Affliction too must enter this family, and a new scene is presented,—prosperity and relief succeed, but still the same principles which sustained in darkness, now lend a lustre to their brightest day. To



resist the influence of such a combination of means must require no common effort. The operation of them is constant and uniform, while in their united character they form an engine of vast power on the side of truth and uprightness, and propriety of conduct.

Let not, then, any expedient of human device, for improving, or forming, or reforming the character of domestic *Servants in general*, be once mentioned in comparison with the discharge of duty by *Masters in general*. The Master of a family is not a solitary character: one is with him, or ought to be, in herself an host; and he has most frequently on his side a combination of influence, which may by him, if managed with prudence, be turned to great account, independently of the power involved in his own personal character and relative conduct. Let Masters then set a proper example, and let them only do their duty, *for there is positively no other effectual remedy*, and then, if the complaints respecting Servants, and the occasions of complaint, do not die away, they must and will be as few as can be expected in the present state of humanity.

*Fourth*, THE IRRESISTIBLE ENERGY INHERENT IN THE FAMILY CONSTITUTION ITSELF; ITS POWER FOR PRESERVING RELIGION AND MORALITY, AND REPELLING EVIL, OR THE CORRUPTION OF MANNERS, is the last point of view in which this subject remains to be illustrated.

On what vantage ground does the conscientious Christian Parent here stand! The springs of public and social life may be greatly corrupted: the nation in which he dwells may degenerate into licentiousness, into idolatry, or the most daring infidelity. Retiring, then, to this sacred enclosure, he may entrench himself, and there, lifting up a standard for God, either wait the approach of better days, or leave a few behind him, on whom the best

blessings of these days will certainly descend. Though the heavens be shut up, and there be no dew, the little enclosure which he cultivates, like the fleece of Gideon, will discover evident marks of the divine favor. It actually seems as though, in the wide scene, where the vices of the age may and can reign triumphant, this were some secure and sacred retreat into which they cannot, dare not enter. "If you will take this course," says such a Parent to his countrymen, "do so; there is left to me one quarter, and only one, to which I may still retire, and where, with *the promised blessing* of God on my head, every inch of ground may be at once disputed and maintained."—"If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye, this day, whom ye will serve: whether the gods which your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; *but as for ME and MY HOUSE, we will serve the Lord.*" Nor is this a singular case: Joshua is here in effect intimating to these, and all other Parents, the extent of obligation which he felt, and that he had no idea of fulfilling his obligations as a Father, if he went home, and shut up himself and his religion in a closet; and, more than this, the Parents of every age, he thus informs how much he could and would effect, through his own family, as well as how much they might, if so disposed.

A practical illustration, however, I shall prefer to reasoning; and as it is one which will at once fully verify and illustrate the inherent energy of the Domestic Constitution, the reader will excuse the length to which it may be extended.

There were natural and lawful descendants of Abraham, who, though not in the line of the child of promise, have been too much overlooked; since he was appointed to be the Father of many, or a multitude of nations. The

prodigious and rapid increase of his posterity, in the line of Isaac, doubling their members every fourteen years, even in Egypt, is one view of the blessing pronounced on Abraham; but the multitude of nations is another view of it. Had the knowledge of the true God been confined solely to Israel, there would have been less inducement to inquire after the history of other branches of Abraham's posterity; but though the Sacred Record is intended principally to unfold the fulfilment of divine favor in the line of Isaac, other parties are incidentally touched upon, in their *connection* with this line. These slight memorials are, at least to my mind, most interesting, as serving to prove that the knowledge and worship of the true God must have been far more extensive than a superficial reader will at first imagine.

As an illustration of this remark, I shall only select the Midianites. This tribe or nation had descended from Midian, the fourth son of Abraham, by Keturah, his second wife. In progress of time, they appear separated into two distinct classes, differing, not only in the place of their residence, but in their character and manners. The eastern and northern Midianites, who were uniformly the enemies of Israel afterwards, were in alliance with the Moabites and Ammonites, and finally marrying among them, both nations were at last destroyed. The southern and western, the more ancient division, dwelt on the borders of the Red Sea, in the lands partly inhabited by Cush, the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah: hence individuals belonging to this tribe were occasionally, and it should seem, by way of reproach, called Cushites. Now, among this class of Midianites, we find one very eminent family, or little tribe, which, at different times, for a succession of ages, is glanced at by the sacred writers. First, when Israel was travelling to Canaan, then just before entering it, and then soon after they got

possession; once in the time of the Judges, once during the reign of the Kings; then just before the captivity of Judah; and finally at the restoration again to Palestine. It almost seems, as if nothing very great or decisive, in regard to the Jews, could take place, without their being at least noticed; for it is only on great occasions, or at certain eras, that they are introduced at all. The uniformity of their character also, during this long period, is peculiarly striking; for though the notices are brief, they are most emphatic, and not one of them contains the slightest censure. Invariably they appear before us on the side of truth, and favorable to the design of God with regard to his chosen people. Though not of the seed of Israel, they not only acquiesce in his sovereignty, but individuals among them exult in the progress of his cause. These were the *Kenites or Rechabites*, who sprung from the south-western Midianites.

Two households, if not three, in this little tribe will stand the most rigid scrutiny, and will reward whatever attention is bestowed upon them. They especially deserve it also, owing to the too common idea, that true religion was entirely confined to those who were the lineal descendants of Abraham by Isaac and Jacob. That the very names by which men were distinguished in ancient times often afford some index to their history is well known to every careful reader of the Scriptures. Now, the names mentioned in the first of these households are not unworthy of observation. That of the Father or head, Raguel or Reuel, signified "the shepherd or friend of God;" that of his son, Jethro, "his excellence or remains;" and that of his grandson, Hobab, "favored or beloved."\*

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\* Some discrepancy on the face of the sacred narrative, where these names occur, has occasioned variety of opinion: the Septuagint, using the names of Raguel and Jethro indiscriminately for the

Upon Moses coming up out of Egypt, before the giving of the law, or the institutions of the Mosaic economy,\* Raguel being, it is supposed, now dead, Jethro appears, like another Melchizedec coming out to bless Abraham. Having heard the whole account of their deliverance, Moses and Aaron, and all the elders of Israel, come before him, while *he* officiates as priest, offers a burnt-offering and sacrifices to Jehovah, and they all eat bread together before the Lord. Their feasting together, “before God,” was a token of their entire amity, as their uniting in one sacrifice had been of unity in faith. This venerable man’s advice too is tendered to Moses, approved by God, and afterwards by all the host of Israel. Adopted as it was, to him we trace “the rulers of thousands and rulers of hundreds, the rulers of fifties and rulers of tens:” an arrangement which to Moses in all his wanderings through the wilderness was of immense importance: indeed the rulers of thousands are supposed to have been permanent. Having thus testified his deep interest, and left behind him a standing memorial of his wisdom, this venerable saint returns to his own land. No doubt such a man took home with him “the Song of Moses,” adopted every word of it as his own, and made no secret in his own country of all that had happened. Witness the fervor of his expressions on hearing the detail of Moses—“Blessed be the Lord, who hath delivered *you* out of the the hands of the Egyptians, and out of the hands of Pharaoh, who hath delivered the *people* from under the

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father-in-law, and, in Judges, Hobab himself being mentioned in our translation as sustaining the same relation. But, on a careful comparison of every passage, the above statement seems to me at present to have been the fact.

\* See Exodus xviii. The transposition of this passage by some Biblical critics to a subsequent period, I incline to think unwarrantable and unnatural; though this would not affect the following narrative, but rather considerably strengthen it.

hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, God is above them."

Jethro's son, Hobab, was probably with him on this occasion, and whether he went home with his Father is uncertain; but if he did, that he returned again is evident; for, upon the tribes of Israel being all ready to move, we hear Moses himself entreating his company in the most earnest manner; indeed, so important was Hobab in his estimation, that he represents him as likely to serve to them "instead of eyes." In this there was no reference to the way or the spot of encampment, for the pillar of the cloud directed these, but to various important conveniences, such as water and pasturage, with which he was acquainted, or to such cases of perplexity as might arise, which were wisely left to human sagacity. To this man, Hobab, and his posterity, a most singular promise was then given by Moses, which we shall find fulfilled to the very letter for many ages. The promise was of large extent. At first it was only, "we will do you good:" but when afterwards enlarged, Moses prevailed with him to proceed. "And he said, Leave us not I pray thee—and it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it *shall* be, that what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the *same* will we do unto thee!"\* This was engaging for great things indeed, for what could he say more? It almost reminds one of the Apostle John, on another occasion, when he said, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." The truth is, that into this family Moses had married, and nothing can be more amiable than the deep interest which he now discovers in the family of his wife.†

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\* Numb. xxix. 32.

† After the time of Isaac and Jacob, we find several such alliances, on which, as they could not now affect the covenant made with Abraham, the Almighty smiled, and discovered to posterity

Rejoicing, therefore, in the opportunity of finding security and repose in Canaan, and remaining with Israel in all their wanderings, of such importance is this man and his posterity, that, forty years afterwards, from the top of the rock, they are espied by Balaam among the tents of Jacob and tabernacles of Israel! "He looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable and said—Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock." Moses dies, but when Joshua crossed over to Jericho, they were there, and the land being once subdued, in the expressive language of Balaam, whether it referred to their past or proposed situation, assuredly now they put their nest in a rock; for "the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm-trees, with the children of Judah, into the *wilderness* of Judah, in the south of Arad; and they went, and *dwelt among the people.*"\* In choosing this retreat, they had not, like Lot, chosen a fruitful plain and well watered, but a wilderness; yet even here, in process of time, one inconvenience remained, which must be removed; for they must be taken care of and preserved. They were surrounded by the Amalekites, a people still infesting the tribe of Judah, and who, for their murderous conduct and intentions to Israel in the wilderness, had been appointed to utter destruction. Here, in short, their situation seemed analogous to that of Lot in Sodom. But God knoweth well how to extricate: so he interposed on their behalf, and that even through the instrumentality of Saul. This deliverance, by such a man, was more evidently an interposition of Divine Providence in their favor, inasmuch as

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how much that mother gained who came to put her trust under the shadow of his wings. The wife of Joseph was an Egyptian, and of Moses a Kenite or Midianite: the grandmother of David was a Moabitess, and other instances might perhaps be found.

\* Judges i, 16.

we seldom or ever read of his paying any regard to what had been recorded for the guidance of posterity. On this occasion, however, he did.

The lands or mountain-ground, including several cities, on which this people resided, had been awarded to them "as a gratuity for having abandoned their native country and joined the Israelites, sharing the hazard of the war and the troubles they encountered in the desert:"\* and their singular escape was ascribed by Saul himself to their having "*showed kindness* to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites *departed* from among the Amalekites."† Such a movement might have accounted for this people being found again at a considerable distance, were we not informed that, so early as the time of the Judges, the northern parts of Canaan being cleared of all oppression from the Moabites, by the conquest and death of their king, who had established his capital at the Kenites' old abode, Jericho, the city of palm-trees—and the land having rest for eighty years—one of "the children of the Father-in-law of Moses," named Heber, "had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kodesh"—that is Kedesh-naphtali,‡ one of the Cities of Refuge, north of the Sea of Galilee, in the tribe of Naphtali.§ But wherever they went, to the enemies of Israel this people were ever enemies, and ready to assist in delivering them from their oppressors. Even a female branch of this, the second family to which I alluded, Jael, the wife of Heber, just mentioned, was therefore by Deborah the prophetess pronounced to be "blessed *above* women," and especially among her own people, or "women in the tent," because she had been the death of Sisera, the general of the enemy's army.

\* Josephus, lib. v. cap. 2.

† 1 Samuel xv. 6.

‡ Judges iv. 6.

§ Judges iv. 11, and Josh. xx. 7.



The last household to which I have referred now comes into view, and is, if possible, more conspicuous than the first. If the first resembled Abraham, in leaving their father's house, and travelling into Canaan, the second more closely resembled that patriarch's self-denied residence in the land of promise. To them it never could wear such an aspect as it did to him, and yet we shall see with what high-toned self-denial they dwelt in it.

The children of Israel, it is well known, were so sadly and frequently given to idolatry, that nothing cured them till they were carried away into Babylon. But here—since the kingdom of Christ was not yet set up, which in its purity, when properly administered, is invulnerable—here was *one family* found strong enough to resist what I believe nothing else, save the invincible power of the family constitution, could have resisted. The name of the Father or Head had been Hemath,\* that of his Son or descendant, Rechab, and that of *his* Son, Jonadab,† now become the Father. Though not by natural descent a child of promise, yet jealous for the honor of the only true God, and foreseeing that the degeneracy, now rapidly increasing, would grow into more ungodliness, Jonadab takes his measures accordingly, and lays his commands upon his children. His advice to them he leaves with all the authority of a law. Abraham, it will be remembered, though the land was promised to his posterity, carefully abstained from laying any claim to it; and, purchasing nothing more than a grave there, he sojourned as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. And now, that the whole land is given to his posterity for a *possession*, here was one man who, though he had no such promise to animate his hopes or those of his posterity, seemed as

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\* 1 Chron. ii. 55.

† 2 Kings x. 15.

though he had caught the mantle of the patriarch; at least, like him, revering the purpose of the God of Abraham, he "commanded his children, and his household after him," in a most peculiar strain. Setting the example himself, and succeeding with his family, they rose to such a degree of self-denied morality, even among the Israelites, in their "land of corn and wine," as to abstain from comforts which Abraham himself had been permitted to enjoy. What is very remarkable, these Children not only venerated their Father's authority as long as *they* lived, but from one generation to another, after several *centuries* had passed away, their descendants are held up by God himself, as rigidly adhering to their first Father's advice, and even "keeping *all* his commandments." Rejecting all interference with the holy land, they continued to say that they only "sojourned" in it. Tending their cattle on the plains of Naphtali, and never once sowing any seed, they built no house, they planted no vineyard, nor had any, but all their days, like Abraham, they dwelt in tents! What a contrast to every Israelitish family, now so indulged, when, if a Father had built a new house and not dedicated it, or planted a vineyard and not yet eaten of the fruit of it, he was exempted from war, and sent home to enjoy the fruit of all his labor! But besides all this, in obedience also to their Father's request and injunction, this family had not only no vineyard, but they had entirely abstained from even the use of wine; and driven into Jerusalem by an invading army, when requested by a prophet of God, in the chambers of the Temple, to deviate from their usual habit, they pointedly declined in the following terms:—"We will drink no wine: for Jonadab, the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your Sons for ever. Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all

your days ye shall dwell in tents, that ye may live many days in the land, wherein ye be *Strangers*.\* Thus have

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\* To the Mosaic economy there cannot be a greater injustice done than to represent it as having been unfriendly to the rest of the world. Peculiar in a high degree, and, in most of its observances, exclusive, it certainly was as it required to be, since it was meant to preserve Divine light and love from being entirely extinguished among men. Still, like a city set on a hill, it was intended by its Founder to be seen at a distance; or, as an elevated light, it was expected to convey information far beyond the bounds of Palestine. Foreigners from every quarter would see or hear, and draw near; and all such were to be welcomed. The friendly benevolence of the Jewish theocracy was indeed very conspicuous in the laws respecting the *Stranger*. Dwelling in Canaan, he found himself incorporated with a protected and highly-privileged order of men. For although a universal religion was no more the genius of that economy than a universal monarchy, the Israelites were commanded, in various ways, to encourage the residence of strangers among them. To enforce an entrance into all the provisions of the covenant made with Abraham upon these strangers was never once imagined or hinted: but though not circumcised, and consequently not entitled to various favors common to every Israelite, still they had their choice and their liberty. At the door of Judaism, indeed, any man might knock, and implore admittance, according to the laws of entrance; and every female might so come and put her trust under the wing of the Lord God of Israel. By intermarriage, therefore, such females became incorporated with the nation, and were even included in the line of the Messiah's ancestry. This was the converse of an Israelite marrying a heathen, without any regard to a change of principle. In reference to this entrance into the congregation, several restrictions were imposed on a few tribes in the vicinity; but the record of such exceptions is an additional proof of the extent to which the privilege was carried. Even these regulations, however, referred to the right of full entrance, and the parties passing beyond the middle wall of partition. To this, after all, no one was compelled, and, retaining his liberty, the *stranger* in Canaan might avail himself of moral and religious advantages, which could no where else be found. Even at the dedication of the temple, when every remnant of the devoted nations was subdued, and the Jewish economy had reached the acme of its order and beauty, Solomon standing before the altar of the Lord, and imagining not in vain, that the Stranger from a far country, hearing of Jehovah's great name, would come and pray

we obeyed the voice of Jonadab, the Son of Rechab our Father, in all that he charged us, to drink no wine, all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed: but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed and done according to all that Jonadab our Father commanded us. But it came to pass, when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, came up into the land, that we said, Come and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of

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towards the temple then completed, he offers up a special request for such men as Jonadab and his posterity—the strangers of the land. For them, too, a court had been erected, separated indeed from that of the Jews by the middle-wall of partition,—a distinction which was reserved for the Messiah to break down, not only that the Jew might not “trouble them which, from among the Gentiles, were turned to God,” but that these Gentiles might become, in the fullest sense, fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and joint partakers of God’s promise in Christ by the gospel. Meanwhile, the stranger belonged to an order of men as highly favored as was possible, in consistency with the theocracy itself not being invaded. Though he could not eat the Passover, nor present other offerings prescribed by the legislator, he could approach the priest with his burnt sacrifice, and, a worshipper of the true God, he offered it, according to a law laid down by Moses from God.—For these strangers the Sabbatical or seventh year was intended to be a year of joy and instruction equally with all Israel.—The spontaneous produce of the ground that year was as free to them as to any Jew, and, at the reading of the whole law that year, they were intended to be present.—Between the natural posterity of Abraham and these strangers, the civil or criminal judge was solemnly enjoined to hold an equal balance—to them, in case of unintentional death, the gates of the city of refuge stood open equally with the Israelite—and, to crown the whole, they were associated, in numerous passages, with the fatherless, and the widow, and the hoary head, as objects of compassion or tender regard. “If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him: the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Such was the genius of a dispensation which has often been charged, most unwarrantably, with an unrelenting, severe, and unreasonable character, by the superficial and prejudiced observer.

the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians: so we dwell at Jerusalem."\*—That is, only until this calamity is overpast.

Ere this time, often had Judah as well as Israel grieved the Almighty by their dissolute conduct; and, though by Him nourished and brought up as Children, often had they rebelled against their heavenly Father! By this time, alas! they had not only mingled among the heathen, but learned their works; and while Jonadab's posterity thus lived, *their* Sons and *their* daughters they had even sacrificed to be devoured in the flames in honor of the idols of Canaan! Amidst all this apostacy and degeneracy, what an example and a contrast of filial regard did these Rechabites exhibit! and, before noticing their Father's deep and judicious concern for his posterity, what a standing reproof were they to the most-highly favored branch of Abraham's Children! Jonadab, with whom these family-rules originated, had long since gone down to the grave: not less than *three hundred* years had passed away; and now, that we may hear the secret of such rigid virtue, these, his descendants, must be drawn from their obscurity, and that by the prophet of God. Surely, when all the circumstances are observed, we cease to wonder that they should be handed down to the end of time in such terms as these:—"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Go tell the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith Jehovah. The words of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, that he commanded *his* Sons not to drink wine, are performed; for *unto this day* they drink none, but obey their Father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me. I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early

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\* Jeremiah xxxv. 6—11.

and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods, to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me. *Because the sons of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have performed the commandment of their Father which he commanded them;* but this people have not hearkened unto me: therefore, thus saith the Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel, Behold I will bring upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all the evil that I have pronounced against them; because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard, and I have called unto them, but they have not answered. And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, *Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab, your Father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he commanded you: therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to* STAND BEFORE ME FOR EVER!"

Moses in his day had promised much, but this is more. Judah, as a body, was just on the eve of being banished from "before God;" and was there ever to be a representative for Jonadab *before Him*, upheld and received as his accepted worshipper, even when the Jews, as a community, were cast out of his sight? So it should seem. We need not suppose, as some have done, that they were actually introduced into the temple service, although afterwards there is something very like it; but surely the expression implies as much as we have already hinted. This promise of God by Jeremiah, could not now be of large extent; for the Kenite by this time had "wasted away;" but it certainly speaks of long continuance, and indeed bears a striking resemblance to that which overcame with

gratitude the heart of David, King of Israel, when he exclaimed,—“Moreover, thou hast spoken of thy servant’s house for a great while to come.” What though but little is yet known of the fulfilment of the promise? Doubtless it was performed, and perhaps may be so to this hour; at least, it seems not improbable that for ages some of this singular family may have been found among the spiritual worshippers of God.

Let us see, however, whether we can find any trace of this family, or of the Kenites, of which they formed a branch. The reader is aware, that when Jeremiah called them out, this was not the first time they had engaged the notice of a prophet. From the top of the rock, above a thousand years before, Balaam had intimated as much as, that, though they should gradually decline in numbers, they would remain in existence at the captivity; and even then be “carried away,” but he does not say destroyed. “Nevertheless,” said he, “the Kenite shall be wasted until Asshur shall carry thee away captive;”\* or, according to another reading,—“How long shalt thou be able to remain? Until Assyria carry thee away captive.” Here, then, is a remnant of them in the days of Jeremiah; and they are brought forward, not to be destroyed, but preserved, and handed down to posterity. Balaam seems to send them to the East; and so with Judah, the tribe to which they adhered, they went; for the ten tribes were already gone. It seems also to be agreeable to very ancient tradition, that they were regarded with more than common respect, even in being “carried away.” The title of the seventieth Psalm, according to the Septuagint (*i. e.* our 71st Psalm), is worthy of notice; a psalm “of or for the sons of Jonadab, and the first who were carried captive;” that is, when Daniel, and his companions, and several others, were transported to Babylon. The au-

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\* Numb. xxiv. 22.

thority of these titles it is unnecessary to discuss; but this one "being found in all the copies of the Septuagint affords reason to conclude, that there was such a tradition concerning the sons of Jonadab, when this version of the Psalms was made."\* Waving, however, this conjecture, after such a promise as that by Jeremiah, we are gratified by finding this people survive even the captivity. Seventy years pass away, and the Jews return to Palestine; but so do the Rechabites, and still in character. As they had not been involved with the ten tribes, so they are not allowed to remain in the dispersion; and whether they were carried away with the chief of the captivity of Judah or not, they were among the first who returned to the Holy Land. "And the families of the Scribes," says the sacred historian, after the captivity; "the families of the Scribes, which dwelt at Jabez, the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites—these are the Kenites, that came of Hemath, the Father of the house of Rechab." According to another reading, the office, the character, and manners of this people are pointed out. "The race of the Scribes that dwelt at Jabez, called porters, obedient and dwelling in tents, are the Kenites," &c. The same opinion seems to have dictated the Vulgate translation:—"*Cognationes quoque scribarum habitantium in Jabes, canentes, atque resonantes, et in tabernaculis commorantes. Hi sunt Cinæi, qui venerunt de Calore patris domus Rechab.*" This passage, therefore, however rendered, sufficiently identifies this singular race, whose history we have now traced down to the time of Ezra, from that of Moses,—a period of not less than from eleven to twelve hundred years!

It seems, however, we are not even then to bid the Rechabites farewell. Even at the present day they are supposed to be in existence; and when once the reported

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\* Blaney.



seat of this little tribe is properly visited, it is not improbable that this will lend peculiar force to the promise, and bring it to remembrance: "Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." Mr. Wolfe, the missionary, himself a convert from Judaism to Christianity, is at present visiting the East. After going into Persia, if he survives, he intends to visit the alleged seat of the Rechabites. Meanwhile, writing from the spot where he first mentions this intention, he says,—“There are at Mousul, on the banks of the Tigris, 200 families, who have one synagogue; one college for young men; one high priest; and they are under the order of Shaul (Saul), the prince of the captivity, residing at Bagdad. All the Jews in this country believe that the Beni Khaibr, near Mecca and Medina (in Arabia), are the descendants of the ancient Rechabites. The Mufti from Merdeen gave me a long description of the Beni Khaibr; but as I have not seen them, I will not, at present, give you his description of them; they are, however, worthy of notice. Those Jews of Khaibr gave infinite trouble to Mohammed, and he never was able to compel them to embrace his religion.—See Sale's Note to chap. 48 in the Alcoran, and D'Herbelot, *Bibliothèque Orientale*.\* On my return from Persia, if the Lord will, I hope to go to Jidda, and from thence to Khaibr, accompanied by an Arab.”†

Again, in his Journal of 27th June, 1824, from Bassora, on the Euphrates, having met with a Jew, named More Yehuda, born at Sanaa, in Yemen, Arabia, who informed

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\* Mr. W. might have added, that Mohammed, whose health had been declining for four years, died, believing that he had been poisoned, at Khaibr, by a Jewish female. If so, and these were indeed the Rechabites, what a parallel would it form to Jael, the wife of Heber!

† Jewish Repository for June, 1825, p. 222.

him, that in that city there were 4,000 families of Jews, he adds,—“He told me that the Jews at Sanaa might easily procure me access to the Rechabites, who are only eight days distant from them. He observed, that the Jews would bring me thither, with a subtilty like that with which Jacob deceived Isaac his Father.” After a long conversation with this man, who is a Jewish Rabbi, Mr. W. adds,—“The following fact was told me by the Jew, More Yehuda. Rabbi Gad of Jerusalem, set off, thirty-five years ago, 1789, with a caravan from Mokka to Sanaa. The Arabs composing the caravan were then at war with the Rechabites, Beni Khaibr. The Rechabites attacked the caravan, and destroyed them. Rabbi Gad, in his anguish, used the exclamation common among the Jews, viz. ‘Hear Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!’ The chief of the Rechabites hearing it, gave orders to stop the massacre. Rabbi Gad was brought to their *tents* and questioned; they asked him, How matters stood at Jerusalem?—Whether Israel still sinned? and whether the temple was not yet built?—They dismissed Gad with presents, and brought him in safety to Sanaa.”\*

The counsels of Jonadab to his children must not, however yet be dismissed, since they will be found, not only to give uncommon interest to the preceding narrative, but tend to illustrate, in such a striking manner, the subject on account of which the whole has been introduced—The *moral power* of the Family Constitution.

Although the principal design of God, in desiring Jeremiah to bring forward these Rechabites, and set wine before them, was to commend filial obedience, he would by no means have so commended this, and so commended Jonadab, had there been either weakness or folly, unnecessary precaution or undue severity in his commands. On the contrary, when the signs of the times in which he

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\* Jewish Repository for September, 1825, p. 344.

lived are simply glanced at, it is presumed the reader cannot fail to admire the sagacity and the tender parental feeling of this Father: a sagacity and deep concern, by which, in connection with the knowledge and worship of the true God, he infused a degree of moral power into the constitution of his family, such as in the history of man has probably never been surpassed, if equalled. Change of circumstances unquestionably call for change of counsel; but still, in his case, with a family at command, let us not fail to remark what parental counsel *can* do.

This eminent man lived at a period when various important prophecies had been left by Elijah, like so many thunder-clouds, to burst upon Israel after he was gone; and, from the vicinity of Jonadab's residence, as well as his general character, it may be fairly presumed, that if he was not present when the grand question was decided between Baal and the true God, about twenty years before this, and if he had not often conversed with Elijah, he surely had with Elisha, who was then living. Another contemporary of Jonadab's was Jehu, a character of a very different description, but still, of all the monarchs who reigned in Israel, he was the only one who was ever *anointed by the commandment of God*. A divine sanction was thus given to this monarch; for, when a man was so anointed, it always implied that he was raised up for a special purpose. For one hundred years, and particularly since the days of Jeroboam, idolatry had been awfully on the advance: Jehu was therefore anointed to destroy it, which perfectly accounts for Jonadab saying, that *his heart was with Jehu's* in such a design. The first meeting of these two men is drawn with that point and beauty by which the Scriptures are distinguished above all human composition.\* No sooner was Jehu anointed king than he became the instrument of accomplishing the predic-

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\* 2 Kings x. 1—28.

tions of Elijah, now gone, and particularly two judgments of the Almighty, the death of Ahab's posterity, and the destruction of Baal, with all his prophets. The steps of Jehu had been marked with blood wherever he went: all whom he met, or who had met with him, fell before his sword, or were ordered to go behind him—but when Jonadab comes out to meet him, his whole deportment is changed. So superior is moral worth to mere rank, that, in some sense, Jehu appears to be the inferior of the two. He first inquires after Jonadab's sentiments, then takes his hand in solemn covenant, and at last, like the prime-minister of Candace, who invited Philip into his chariot, having seated Jonadab by his side, he seems evidently elated by the sanction of such a character. "Come," says he, "see my zeal for Jehovah." Jonadab being thus driven to the king's palace at Samaria, he was present, and concurred in the destruction of Baal and his temple, with all his prophets. Such a scene was surely not to be concealed from his family at home; and so, it seems, it was not; for, in perfect harmony with this spirit, one is now delighted to find, at the distance of nearly three hundred years, additional light thrown on his character, and to find especially that he paid such attention to the welfare and continuance of his family. Hence the general consistency of his character as a good man; for the man who is consistent in his *family* is consistent every where, and almost in every thing.

It is however obvious, that the counsels of Jonadab seemed to encroach on the natural liberty of his Children; for what law of either God or man has forbidden the use of wine, the planting of vineyards, or the building of houses? Surrounded as they were too by the wine of Lebanon, and the wine of Helbon, and the grapes of Eshcol; dwelling in a land celebrated for its "corn and wine," his counsels must have seemed the more severe.

But if the snares and temptations of his day were peculiar, and if he saw that such restrictions were called for, on the principle of giving up a part to secure the whole ; nay, if he saw that city-life, or a permanent abode under the vine or fig-tree, and the use of wine, were associated with such snares in Israel, as in those times would inevitably lead his Children not only into *idolatry*, but idolatrous *vices* ; then his character was as eminent for sagacity and forethought, as it was for parental care and kindness.

Now, in his day, and after it, what was the actual course of events in Israel ? There is a progress in sin, and though, when Jonadab lived, he saw it necessary to be thus strict, his advice and commands were given under an impression, that the people among whom they dwelt might wax worse and worse. Accordingly, about ninety or a hundred years afterwards, by the time of Hosea, we hear the Almighty threatening to “take away the corn, and the wine, and oil,” because they did not know or acknowledge Him in these his gifts ; and no wonder, for then they “looked to other gods, and loved flagons of wine.” A contemporary prophet, Amos, says, “Ye have built houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them ; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them :” and why ? Because they were at ease in Zion, and trusted or dwelt securely on the mountain of Samaria. “They lay,” he says, “upon beds of ivory, and stretched themselves on couches ; they drunk wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the finest perfumes.” If such were their family habits, their professed religious services were of a kindred nature ; since “they drank the wine of the condemned *in the house of their god.*” Such a course was not likely here to stop. By the time of Isaiah, therefore, the scene was awful. “They have erred,” said he, “through wine, and through

strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment." The very next year after this, Judah being now equally corrupt with Israel, we hear king Ahaz saying, "Because the gods of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me,"—so "he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem, and in every *several city* of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods." And now, that we come down to Jeremiah, the course of degeneracy is complete. "Where are thy gods that thou hast made?" he inquired; "let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah! Seest thou now," said Jehovah, "what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The *children* gather wood, and the *fathers* kindle the fire, and the *women* knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink-offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."

The counsels of Jonadab must now appear in their proper light. No such Parent would have imposed such restrictions on his posterity without some powerful reason: but if the whole are thus proved to bear on idolatrous customs, or upon indulgences, which in such time generally and inevitably led to idolatry, and if, by following these counsels, Jonadab's posterity had been so far preserved, there is a peculiar propriety in their being *now* brought forward, not only as examples of filial obedience, but to condemn Judah before being banished to Babylon for these very sins—idolatry, and licentiousness its invariable associate.

The commands of Jonadab have, it is true, been accounted for on other principles. I am perfectly aware of

the abhorrence of wine *professed* by the Arabian tribes, a feeling of which Mohammed availed himself sixteen hundred years after the time of Jonadab: and I do not forget the words of an ancient historian, so similar to those of Jonadab, when describing the Arabians.\* But the Kenites, of which the Rechabites formed a family, were not, properly speaking, Arabians, and for ages had lived in *cities* in the south of Judah, and “among the people.” No, the counsels of Jonadab *originated* with himself, and his posterity referred to him and *no higher*, not even to Rechab his Father. By Jonadab they were first delivered as imperative, regarding them, without doubt, as so many preservatives against that idolatry, to which he was himself, from principle, so much opposed.

And however unnecessary the letter of this good man's family-precepts may at first reading seem to us, their spirit and design may convey solid instruction to the Parents of any age. The only safeguard in licentious times is self-denial, and if lawful enjoyments are not then restricted, the bent of our nature will hurry us into sinful compliances. The precise point between lawful pleasures and reigning vice is like a boundary between two kingdoms always at war with each other. Weak, then, and sinful as we all are, is it not most prudent to leave some space between, and not venture too far? This was the policy of Jonadab, and see the effects! His family continues through successive generations, and free from many things which bloated and defiled the professed and privileged Sons of Zion. In evil times and evil days, yet

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\* “Their laws prohibit the sowing of corn, or any thing else that bears fruit, the planting of trees or vines, the drinking of wine, and the building of houses; and the transgression of them is punished *capitally*. The reason is, their thinking that those who are possessed of such property can be easily forced to submit to the authority of their more powerful brethren.”—Diodorus Siculus, book xix. 94.

faithful among the faithless, the temper and disposition in which this family stood towards the things of the world, has secured to them everlasting remembrance; and their history will ever remain on the Divine record, as singularly illustrative of the power which resides in the family constitution. Balaam had said indeed that they should be "wasted away;" but what was it which retarded the progress of decay, and secured their wasting away so slowly? Was it not the influence of moral and religious principle grafted on *natural* connection and attachment?

This, then, is the family constitution in all its power, and this is one of the ends in view by Him who framed it: a constitution of things which, though to the eye of man insignificant and often neglected, yet still survives, even when surrounded by storms which tear up the foundations of nations, or sweep them into oblivion; nay, which, in the very height of the tempest, or before it begins, is laid hold of by Infinite Wisdom as the germ and the security of a better day.

Thus, when the flood was coming in upon the world at large, Noah found grace in the eyes of its Author. When the world was overrun with idolatry, he found Abraham, and made him the Father of many nations. "When another king arose that knew not Joseph, the same evil entreated our kindred—in *which time* Moses was born:" and thus, in corrupt, and licentious, and idolatrous times, by adhering to the precepts of their Father, we see the posterity of Jonadab remain in Canaan, like a pillar of brass, to indicate the unmouldering character and extent of domestic moral power, as well as the ancient elevation of patriarchal piety.

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Such then, by *the express institution, and under the promised blessing of God*, being the amount of influence



given to parents,—such their power to form either to future usefulness or greatness of character,—such the power inherent in a well-regulated family to form and improve the character of Servants,—and such the power of resistance to evil, of which that constitution over which every Parent presides is capable,—we are now able to account for so much being said in Scripture on the subject, as well as for the very strong terms which are there so often employed.

## SECTION SEVENTH.

### THE DANGER AND VANITY OF INTERFERENCE WITH THE DOMESTIC CONSTITUTION.

Mistaken benevolence inventing systems of relief, from obligations which can never be fulfilled beyond the Domestic Circle.—Danger and vanity of interference illustrated by reference to the apparent intentions of the Almighty, in founding and continuing to uphold this singular Constitution.

THIS household economy, once understood and established, we are prepared to step beyond the threshold, and survey the general body of a Nation. It consists simply of a number of such families; and it is of domestic virtues we must think, when we think of the morals of a nation. "A nation is but a shorter name for the individuals who compose it; and when these are consistent Husbands and Wives, Fathers and Children, Brothers and Sisters, Masters and Servants, they will be good *citizens*." Every thing which is moral in a nation, and much that is holy, and worthy, and useful in the church, if not actually formed, is fostered and cherished before the household fire. This is especially worthy of regard, since *whatever* form of political government the nation may assume, the constitution of her families may, and generally does, remain the same; and any interference with that constitution, any worldly policy, or even any officious inter-

meddling benevolence, which would here interfere, will, to a certainty, weaken, and, at last, endanger the body politic: that is, any interference affecting the moral strength and mutual obligations of this constitution; the connection between its parts, whether natural or civil, moral or instituted, by the God of nature and of grace.

On the part of the ruling power in a State, one might imagine such an interference; but let us see what must be the result. Looking at human nature, not as it ought to be, but as it is, we find "two strong feelings have always agitated, in a greater or less degree, the state of human society,—the desire to possess power, and the desire to resist it. The struggle between these feelings necessarily exists under every form of government; nor can the most imperious despotism, though it may intimidate and subdue, ever entirely eradicate and destroy the spirit of opposition. We hear of Asiatic monarchs, who, in the mere wantonness of their moody cruelty, command human beings to be butchered before them; and we are thence apt to infer, that there is *no* restraint on their will, and *no* limit to their power. But this is an error into which Europeans have frequently fallen, from their imperfect acquaintance with the laws, and usages, and manners of eastern nations. It is generally among his ministers, his slaves, and his favorites, that the Asiatic tyrant seeks for his victims. He seldom ventures beyond the sphere of his court to murder or to spoliage; and while the floors of the imperial residence are purpled with the blood of his officers, his vizirs, and his concubines, he would pause, ere he unjustly deprived the meanest citizen of his property, his life, or his domestic power. The man who passes within the gates of the palace, leaves behind him the sympathy of his fellow-subjects. They know that ambition has guided his steps to the foot of the throne, and that he has bound himself to obey the will, in order

to share the power of his master. They, therefore, hear with indifference of his disgrace, his exile, or his death; but let a sovereign violate the laws of justice, in depriving a private and unoffending citizen of his liberty or his life," much more should he invade the province of parental duty, or violate the rights of *Parents*, "and he will learn to his peril in the East, as well as in the West, that no King *can be secure on his throne, where no subject is safe in his house.*"

But though no monarch had ever dreamt of trespassing on the province of parental duty, his subjects may; and perhaps some persons may be disposed to aver—his subjects have. Unwittingly, indeed, in most cases, if not in all, and in many from motives of high-toned, though mistaken benevolence, they certainly have sometimes tried to devise a substitute, in a case for which no substitute or scheme of human device can be found—the negligence or indisposition of Parents. Then it is, however, though benevolence exert all its energies, that you see education, so called, narrowed, as to its vital import, into the mere mechanical arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic, with perhaps some proposed outward polish of manners. A mere corner of the wide field of parental duty is occupied; the rest, to a superficial eye, may seem left vacant merely, but it is not so. There grow up, with spontaneous luxuriance, the very worst of habits and dispositions, to which these arts of reading and writing only give a more insidious power of working mischief. In short, the general surface of this broad field no heart or hand *can* cultivate, save the parental.

The application of a system of relief for the *body*, generally denominated Poor-rate, has, by many, in our day, been strongly deprecated, as ultimately endangering the tone and the health of human society; but whatever may be said on that subject, let these same individuals, and all

others, have a care how they interfere here. The professed application of relief to the *mind*, by any theoretical scheme of man's devising, where a constitution of God's own creation and upholding stands ready before us, must ever be productive of consequences the most pernicious. Were human benevolence uniformly associated with wisdom; were it not found often connected with want of forethought; in its impatience of applying a remedy, were it not often particularly impatient of what may seem the most formidable, though it should have been proved to be the only right commencement; were it not too often heedless of patient and powerful, because prospective measures, then the constitution of the human family would not have been so often and so sadly overlooked. Such, however, being the imperfections which often accompany the contrivances of human benevolence, may I not inquire, whether it is not very possible, or rather very likely, in this day of plans and schemes, for benevolence itself, if not associated with other qualities, to frame, without-doors, some things which, on the parental mind within, shall operate so far as a bounty on idleness, and as a drawback on exertion; so far take from parental obligation its appropriate awe, and from parental neglect its salutary shame; so far deprive parental improvidence of its just responsibility, and parental foresight of its fair, and rich, and delightful reward? These are at least important questions, and to me they seem to deserve the deliberate and serious consideration of not a few.

To the occasional aberrations of human benevolence, however, I need not be confined. In man, generally, there is a strong, if not a constant tendency, either to overlook or slight, and then to interfere with the arrangements of Infinite Wisdom; or if one party slight or neglect them, another at last interferes, not by calling men to first principles, and their consequently incumbent duty to God,

but in the way of furnishing some expedient of human ingenuity, to supply the defect, and restore the tone of society. The vanity, however, of any such interference here, will, I presume, be more apparent, when the *designs* of the Almighty, in framing and upholding the Family Constitution, are regarded with serious attention. If it is true, that "God never made his work for man to mend," in every design of his the ends must be carefully observed, since, if those ends could have been reached by the ingenuity of man, no such constitution of things had existed. As a specimen of these, take the following :

1. By the Family Constitution, its divine Founder intended to produce and prolong *natural affection*; for this alone has done both.

"To the human race, the importance of natural affection is incalculable. It resists, in a great degree, the tendency to absolute selfishness; expands and softens the heart; excites and nourishes sympathy and compassion; and prevents the world from becoming the seat of unbearable violence and cruelty. But natural affection is solely the result of natural relations, and almost all these are originated by the family state; while with every other distribution of mankind, which can be substituted or proposed, they are wholly incompatible. Besides the attachment which natural affection forms in men towards the branches of their families, ultimately extends itself, and by a natural process, to their country and laws, their government and nation."\*

"Domestic love is sure the mind to wake,  
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;  
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,  
Another still, and still another spreads;  
Child, Parent, neighbor, first it will embrace,  
His country next, and next all human race."†

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\* Dwight.

† Pope, altered.

If, therefore, such enlarged philanthropy is ever to prevail, assuredly the precise point where the pebble must fall, is within the little circle of domestic life; and any interference on the part of man must affect, correspondingly, all the circles which surround it.

2. By the institution of families, God intended to provide, not only for the preservation and support, but for the *education of children*.

Education, however, I use only in the proper sense of the term, as including not merely instruction, and primarily religious instruction, but the formation of habits. "Perhaps no word, so frequently heard, has, in modern times, been used with less perception of its import and extent than that of education. In the sense in which it is usually taken, it signifies instruction in letters, in human science, and various accomplishments of the mind and body. So entirely distinct is it considered from moral, and especially religious instruction, that when the particular process is spoken of by which the truths of religion are communicated to the mind, and impressed upon the heart, we are obliged, in order to make ourselves understood, to prefix an epithet to the term, and call it a *religious* education. This exclusion of every thing religious from the notion of education is so complete, that to say of any one, he is educated, conveys no idea of religious care having been exercised over him in his early years; no idea of religious principles having been at any time implanted, or now actually operating in his heart; and though no truth of the Sacred Scriptures should be clearly apprehended by his understanding, he would, nevertheless, pass, in the language of the world, for a person of education. Had not a very culpable alteration taken place in modern manners, this could not have happened. There were times, and among ourselves, when

the educated person was presumed to be acquainted with the faith of his ancestors, and the Bible was among the first books put into his hand ; when the elements of religious truth and of science were taught together ; and when even the higher branches of learning, like his daily food, were ‘sanctified by the word of God and prayer.’ The practice with many is changed, and education as a matter of course, in the lips of many, no longer implies religious information.

“But, notwithstanding this alteration, never did we hear so much of the value and advantages of education, and of its connection with happiness and virtue. But of what is this affirmed ? Of ‘a thing of shreds and patches ;’ splendid and many-colored it may be ; yet not worthy of a better appellation, because not connected with any principle, or directed to any end worthy of our being. To open the mind to human science, to awaken the pleasures of taste, and to decorate the external man with the adornings of civil and refined life, might be sufficient to occupy the office of education, were there no God, no Saviour, and no future being. Were this life not preparatory, and man not hurrying on to the presence of his Judge ; had he no pardon to implore, or law to obey, then this would be education : but most affectingly deficient will the knowledge of that youth be found, and *negligent* in the highest degree must his *Parents* be considered, if his mind is left unoccupied by other objects, and unfamiliarized to higher considerations. Thus they may rear a whited wall, or build a whited sepulchre, but they enclose an uncorrected corruption within. Perhaps they do worse ; they give play and activity to the powers, without directing their movements, and abandon instruments of an energy not to be calculated, to the stimulus of principles and passions, which employ them only for the purposes of destruction.”\*

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\* Richard Watson.



Besides, the very substance of proper education is the establishment of good habits, the provision for which is so eminently conspicuous in the domestic constitution—"habits extending alike to the body and the soul, and influencing equally the thoughts and the affections, the language and conduct. Without these, nothing in the human character or human life can be efficacious, or permanent, or useful. To establish these, therefore, in the morning of life is the great business of education. Habits, however, are formed only by the frequent and long-continued repetition of the same measures; and nothing ever becomes habitual, except that which has been long and often repeated." But, for the formation of these, no school can provide, nor can any voluntary society ever be formed. "To accomplish such repetition, nothing will suffice but the steady affection of married Parents; a manifest and striking proof of our Creator's design in their union."\* No, *but for this institution*, the children of a nation can *never be habitually trained to industry and economy, to submission or good order—never to sweetness of disposition or tenderness of affection, to amiableness of manners or offices of kindness.*† Respecting the best form of national government, mankind have been contending for ages: but, whatever be the form of political arrangements, let the family constitution once be neglected, then will the blessings of rational freedom and good government, with all the superior blessings of morality and religion, vanish from that land. Nay, in time, it must become but one vast den, and its inhabitants, if not destroyed, would change into animals the most ferocious and terrible on earth. Such is the merciful preservative, the simple but efficacious and mighty check, involved in this small and unpretending, but invincible constitution!

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\* Dwight.

† Additional proof of this will be found under the title of *Family Instruction*, the obligations to which are *untransferable*.

Other ends might be illustrated, and will occur in the course of these pages: let these, for the present, suffice; but in illustration of the danger and folly of interference, as well as the vanity of artificial arrangements proposed by man, I must not omit to notice one peculiar facility thus afforded by God, for the *accomplishment* of his own purposes.

3. By the Family Constitution, the Almighty has himself marked out the only proper and effectual division of labor,—a division which past ages show he is not only determined to preserve, but will not suffer to be *invaded* with impunity, and the only division, for the *ends* in view, on which man can warrantably expect *his* blessing.

God made man upright: since then “he hath sought out many inventions,” and thus often been involved in a labyrinth. Infidel philosophy writes on human perfectability, and sees no evil, but good, in promiscuous intercourse. To meet the demoralizing inroads of commercial speculation, or relieve the feelings of many while engaged in amassing wealth, another may propose parallelograms of the species,—but all *localities*, of whatever description, whether for the gratification of appetite or the acquisition of property, nay, for the promotion of benevolence, or even religion professedly, which disregard or interfere with the Family Constitution, must not only, sooner or later, break down, but they will bring their own punishment along with them; and man at last must submit to begin and go on with man, *where* God begins, and *as* he goes on with him.

Such a line of things being made ready to our hands, though it should be mortifying to human vanity, is it any hardship that an authoritative stop should have been put by the Almighty to any other? Let but the peculiar, the absolutely inimitable features of this division of labor be

once understood, man will not only be afraid to touch with it—he will admire it as he ought, and work only in cautious subordination.

Labor is the appointment of Heaven, though man naturally is averse from it, and though it be divided, except he is brought generally to feel so far voluntary, our finest proposals are abortive. “But here is a division of labor which is perfectly *voluntary*: the employment being ordinarily chosen by the individual for himself. The situation in which he stands as a Man and a Parent, and the partner with whom he is connected in life, are both the objects of his choice; and these facts, united with the common rewards of industry, furnish all the reasons which can usually exist to render it cheerful and efficacious.”

“The *minuteness* of this division of labor is eminently conspicuous. To preserve the order of an apostate world required the wisdom of God. The great task of establishing it among such beings as we are, selfish, revolting, and refractory, he has assigned to an innumerable multitude of hands: a multitude sufficiently great to receive it in such portions, so small and so circumstanced, as to ensure both the ability and the inclination to accomplish it effectually. These portions are so small as to involve only the Children of a single family. To this little flock are given regularly two Rulers, taking them all in all, better disposed and better qualified, in almost all instances, than any other persons found in the world. The circumstances in which those are placed who are to be governed are more favorable to the accomplishment of the end than any other can be. Their infancy, childhood, and youth, in succession; their feebleness, dependence, and ignorance; the affection and superiority, the care and kindness of the Parents, the instinctive love and reverence of the children, together with their necessary and long-continued residence, during their earliest years,

under the parental roof: all these present to the contemplative eye a combination of things which display, by their singular adaptation, one of the most remarkable proofs of infinite wisdom. Fewer hands could not possibly accomplish this mighty task: a task which cannot be accomplished by proxy, nor could substitutes be found. All the wisdom of legislation, all the energy of despotism, would be spent upon it in vain. It is beyond calculation a greater and more arduous work than all the labors of all Rulers, whether legislative, executive; or judicial, united."

"This division of labor is, in short, the best, because it is the simplest and easiest possible,—the best, because it has been thoroughly tried, and has always been able peacefully and happily to accomplish the ends in view,—the best, because it is the established order of the universe, the result of Divine wisdom and goodness, and one leading proof of these attributes, from age to age."\*

Thus it appears, that the Constitution of a human family, though the most diminutive upon earth, not only stands in the relation of cause to effect, but, like almost every other such cause appointed by God, it is one cause producing various effects, and so producing them, that neither can otherwise be *fully* reached by man; while the combination of effects thus produced, by any expedient, or plan, or new view of society, of our devising, is positively and altogether impossible. Nature is sparing of causes, prolific in effects, so that if men touch with but one of the former, they at once deprive themselves of many benefits. In the world of nature, this has been better understood and often admired, but, with it, the moral world is here in perfect harmony.

If the heat of the sun contributes to the life of animals and the vegetation of plants, the ripening of seeds and the

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\* Dwight.

fluidity of water, the elevation of vapor and the formation of clouds: if air is so constituted as to preserve animals alive and support combustion, to convey sound to great distance and the winged fowl from place to place: if the power of gravitation, existing in all bodies, preserves all in their places, restrains the ocean to her bed, and the earth in her orbit; let us descend to the little domestic circle, constituted as divinely, and there we find one single propensity, when regulated by Christian principle, producing far more important effects, because more nearly allied to the moral image of God: nay, even when not so regulated, effects are thus produced, without which the moral world could not stand. But once suppose the Parents, Christian—then, from the single principle of natural inclination, in the heart of two individuals, we see proceed not only profitable solicitude for their offspring, but social union; the bonds of unity, genuine patriotism, goodness and prudence in those who are one day to govern; fidelity and contentment in those who are one day to obey. Hence only a single propensity keeps each individual in his appropriate sphere, becomes the bond of civil society and the principle of correct conduct, of laudable enterprise and innocent recreation.

If the domestic Constitution, therefore, is actually the divinely-appointed cause of various effects, which cannot otherwise be fully reached, with what sacred regard ought it to be viewed by every Christian, in all his attempts for the benefit of man! There is, it is true, a secret in the ways of God, but that secret once discovered, it is to be secreted no more. Let the ends to be attained, therefore, only be kept in view, then the vanity, not to say impiety of interference will be more apparent, as well as the pernicious tendency of all systematic attempts, of whatever description, which either disregard this unpretending Constitution, or tend in any degree to relax it, or relieve

Parents from duties imposed on them by God himself. That state of society must ever be most agreeable to his will, where the highest sense of responsibility rests on their shoulders, and where, instead of specious plans with a view to relieve them, every thing is done to keep their hearts alive to the unapproachable peculiarity of their honorable situation.

## SECTION EIGHTH.

### CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

The power of accommodation in the Family Circle to all other human institutions.—The inimitable character, and highest end, of the Domestic Constitution.

THIS Constitution of a Family, at once so singular and invaluable, may have been neglected; it may have been misunderstood; and millions also, without doubt, have enjoyed its benefits with delight and comfort; although the grounds, and original cause, could not, by them, be explained.

Other forms of government, or “the powers that be,” existing at the same moment, in different quarters of the globe, the intelligent Christian regards as so many effects of a superintending Providence; and Christianity, ever friendly to order and to peace, enjoins obedience for conscience’ sake. These forms, however, are so diversified, that in one he can read the mercy; in another the judgment of God: and not only so, but, with the lapse of time, he sees that these various forms, not only may, but actually do, change; so that the same spot of ground has been occupied in succession, by the gradations and extremes of opposite arrangements. It is not so with the Domestic Constitution. Like the constitution of the

church of Christ itself, indeed, that of the Family has been, at times, sadly invaded or corrupted, and abused ; but still of these two constitutions, *and of these alone*, can the Almighty be considered, in a special and peculiar sense, as the *sole* and all-sufficient Founder and Ruler, Guardian and Judge. Were evidence of this even still desired, the proofs might be confined to two.

1. Their power of accommodation to human constitutions, *without the smallest violation of their peculiar character*.

The political and civil arrangements of men have been various and perpetually shifting ; but the church and the family, which can exist, and, if let alone, can thrive under them all, remain ever the same.

As to the church, even under the Jewish theocracy, when it seemed so interwoven with the state, it remained the same under various forms of political government. Whether under the Jethronian prefects, as they have been called, in the wilderness, or the judges after the death of Joshua, the kings who succeeded them, or the priests and public-spirited individuals after the captivity, it remained the same ; that is, under any of these civil arrangements, the church might have prospered ; under each of them we see it revived and purified, and under each producing individual religious characters of the highest standing. But whatever may be thought of this remark, Christianity, as by Christ established, while it has symbolized with no one form in preference ; yet, wherever permitted, it has purified the springs of every form of government, and shed its own peculiar blessings on them all. When let alone, it has flourished, whether in Britain or in America, —when persecuted in any land, the blood of its martyrs has, sooner or later, always proved the seed of the church. Infidel philosophy, and literary violence, the dagger and



the clog, have all been tried in vain. "Storms but enliven its unfading green;" for its very highest triumphs were achieved under a Domitian and a Nero; while, like its Author, in its own essential character, the church remains "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." This continuity of the Church, I grant, respects only its vital character. Changes as to its form and constitution even *it* has undergone. Time there was, when, from its dispersion in single families, it was gathered within the precincts of those singular tribes, of whom it was said, "Lo, the people shall dwell *alone*, and they shall not be reckoned among the nations." So it remained until the Almighty himself shook all nations, and the Desire of all Nations arrived; and although even now we see not yet all things put under Him, still we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, who will one day take to himself his great power and reign—reign, I believe, according to the form of that House which he instituted by the Fishermen of Galilee.

But however the Church might change as to its outward form, till it ended in a kingdom which is not of this world, and a kingdom which cannot be moved, one small unpretending constitution was set up from the beginning, and, it seems, must exist the same in all ages, however society may assume different shapes and forms—however times may change, and we change with them. There are some men to whom every thing relating to man, as man, is interesting and important, who are also fond of antiquity. Let them look here, and, amidst the constant and inevitable vicissitude of human affairs, though life itself is but a vapor, in the domestic constitution as such, they may discover one, if not the only "imperishable type of evanescence"—the only form of humanity over which time and circumstances have had no control: that only form with which all generations can fully sympathize;

which the Jewish economy, far from invading, so recognized and venerated, and which it remains for Christianity to exhibit in all the power and beauty which were intended from the beginning by its Divine Author.

The Domestic Constitution, thus surviving all the changes of time, without any change in itself, its power of accommodation must needs be great, but the charm of all in this case is, that nothing is sacrificed. Its power of accommodation, therefore, to the social forms of man's device, must arise in part from its being complete within itself, and independent of them all, as it also existed before them,—“the result of mere nature; requiring the intervention of no force, no law, or human contrivance; yet extending throughout the world, over every age and nation, in the same easy manner: it exists everywhere, through mere propensity, under forms of political government, which may be called the two extremes; and under both it exists at once, without contention and without difficulty.”\* Invaded it has been, indeed, both by the arm of despotism, and the injudicious intermeddling of human kindness; but both at last have been alike wearied, and have desisted: the reason is, that the Christian church, and the human Family, have, in fact, but one and the same favor to implore, in every land, whether from tyranny or pretended benevolence, and that is—to let them alone.

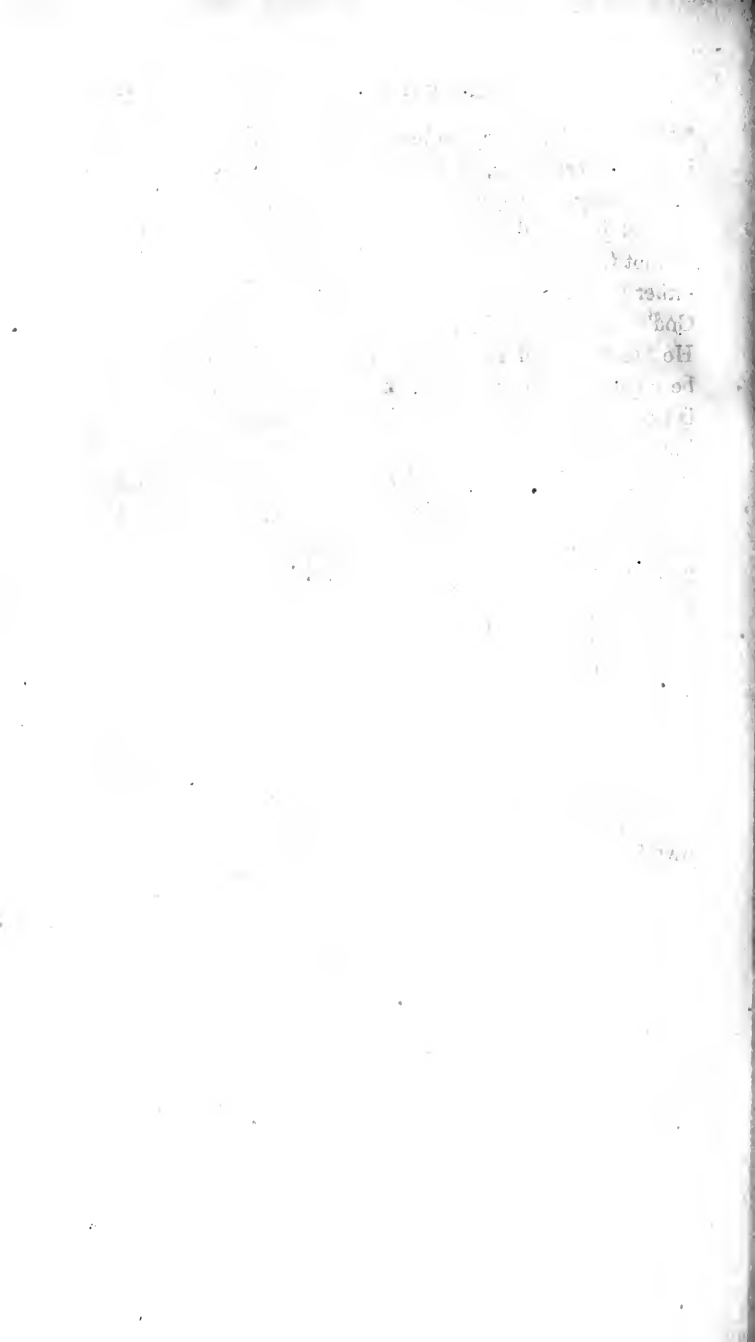
Amidst the ruins of the Fall, it is truly refreshing to see two such Constitutions in existence, and thus upheld; which blessing, and being blest, will, of themselves alone, one day, introduce the Millennium.

2. The *inimitable* character of the Family and the Church, is another striking proof, that they are the only Constitutions of divine formation, upheld by God, on which the eye can rest.

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\* Dwight.

Much, indeed, may be learned from both, for the purifying and perfecting, as far as may be, both political and civil arrangements, whether systems of government or of natural jurisprudence; but man, with all his ingenuity, cannot frame any constitution of things, *precisely similar*, either to a Family or the Church of Christ. They are of God's own production, and, like every thing else which He has "created and made," defy imitation, and cannot be copied. With regard to a Family in particular, there is not only nothing else like its Constitution among men, but, though there are gradations of rank, or degrees of glory, there is nothing similar to it even among the angels of God. Framed for this brief and transitory, yet all-important state of existence, and to expire with the last generation of human beings, still it points to what is permanent and unchangeable. In its constitution, as far as we can penetrate, it displays the nearest approach to the divine government, and, unquestionably, it bears this resemblance, with an immediate view to the best interests of that government. As man himself was originally created in the image of God, so it should seem, in the depth of his condescension, he intended to place him at the head of a government,—the shade or similitude of his own!



## PART SECOND.

THE UNTRANSFERABLE OBLIGATIONS, AND PECU-  
LIAR ADVANTAGES, OF THE DOMESTIC CONSTI-  
TUTION.

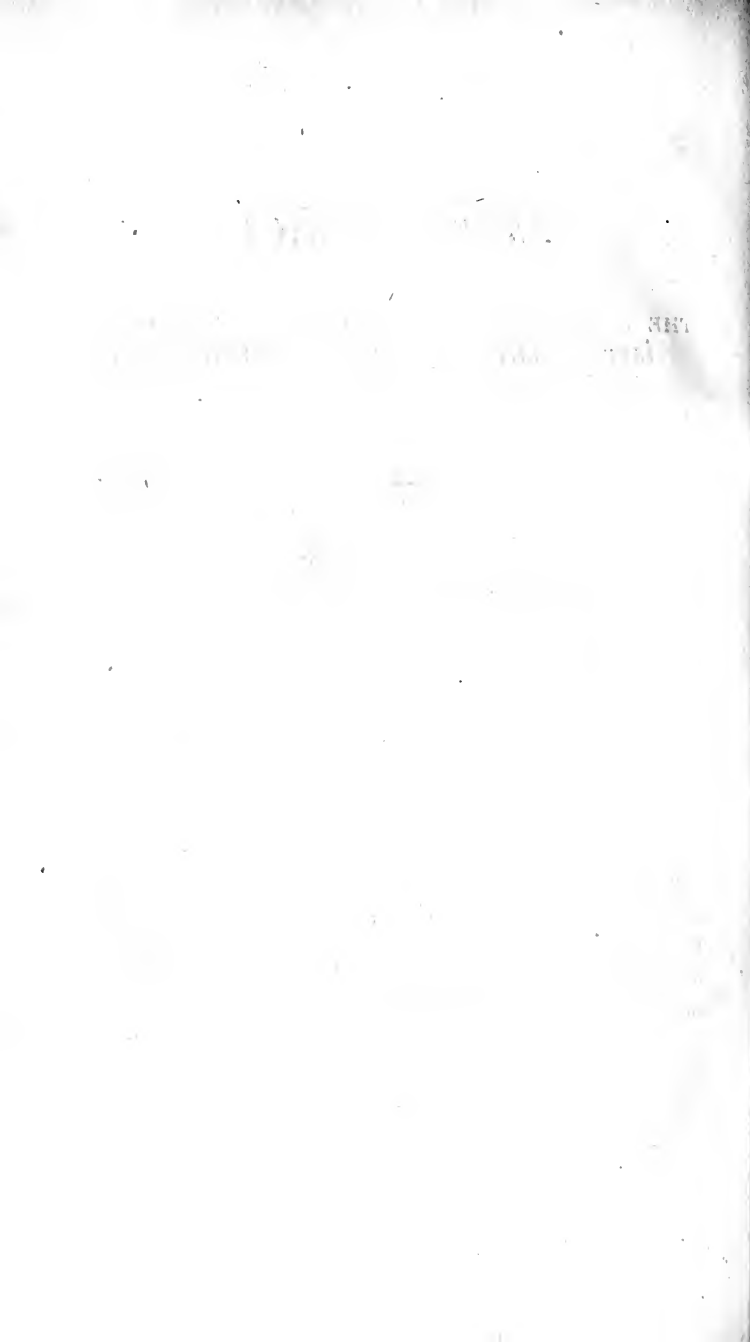
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By thee  
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,  
Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of Father, Son, and Brother, first were known.  
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,  
Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,  
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets.           MILTON.

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By this most astonishing connection, these reciprocal correspond-  
encies and mutual relations, almost every thing which we see in  
the course of Nature is brought about. Things, seemingly the  
most insignificant imaginable, are perpetually observed to be *neces-  
sary conditions* to other things of the greatest importance.

BUTLER.



## PART SECOND.

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### SECTION FIRST.

#### OBEDIENCE AND SUCCESS CONTRASTED WITH NEGLIGENCE AND RUIN.

Introductory remarks.—The inevitable consequences of obedience and neglect illustrated by reference to two of the most memorable instances in Scripture.

THROUGHOUT these pages, the object of the writer, with regard to the Domestic Constitution, is to arrive at the knowledge of “the thing as it is.” Whether he succeeds, it will remain for others to determine; but the object is certainly of the first importance, not only to the kingdom of Christ, but to the state of society in general: for although God himself does not govern the world as he does the church, nor treat the individual Christian as he does the unbeliever, still there are certain great fixed principles which, it seems, He owes to himself—to his government—and to man, as man, inviolably to maintain. Thus, if Jehovah is “angry with the wicked *every day*,” he also “judgeth the righteous” *every day*; and his judgments thus beginning with them in this life, though all

should be virtually converted into the chastisements of a Father, "who judgeth according to every man's work of what sort it is," still, such judgments or chastisements are intended to warn the unbelieving or disobedient, of what inevitably awaits him, both in time and eternity. "For if judgment must begin at the house of God, what shall the end be of them who obey not the gospel of God? and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

At all events, whatever may be said in reference to some other subjects of investigation, the Domestic Constitution is one which, it appears, is regarded by its Divine Author, according to certain fixed and unalterable laws, such as we have already attempted to illustrate; and it will afford additional confirmation, if we again see the Almighty acting towards his own people on the same impartial and fixed principles which he has revealed for the guidance and monition of man, as man.

For the exhibition of a contrast between the frown and the favor of God, resting on a Father and his posterity, I have therefore selected, not two persons of opposite sentiments, but two parents whose individual character for piety has been admitted by all ages. Such a picture will serve to show the reader that there is no respect of persons with God, and that he is determined to act on the same solemn principles with his own people, as with those who do not, in any degree, acknowledge his authority.

#### OBEDIENCE AND SUCCESS.

Several circumstances unite to render the family of Abraham a subject of peculiar interest. At the age of seventy-five, he was himself a convert from idolatry, or, at all events, he was then called to give his opinion and decided testimony against it, by first leaving his country, and finally his Father's house. In the course of but a



few years after this, though God had given him no such prospect, and though there was nothing respecting which he was less solicitous, he had in fact become a very wealthy man. Not being permitted either to build or to purchase land, this increase of his property operated greatly in extending his responsibility, and increasing the burden of his care. His family, and especially a household of such extent, living in Canaan at such a time, was far from being beyond the influence of contamination. The vicinity of wicked cities required constant vigilance, and Abraham dwelt actually in sight of Sodom and Gomorrah. There too he had relations, at least a nephew and his family, which might lead him and his servants to visit Sodom occasionally; indeed we know, that the strength of his household had, upon one occasion, to be exerted on their behalf. At the same time he lived not far from Salem, the residence of Melchisedec. Though inferior to this wonderful man in some respects, at that period of his life to which Scripture refers,\* with him he might associate, and without doubt enjoy all the intimacy of which patriarchal neighborhood could admit. Thus was Abraham and his family placed between good and evil, between a blessing and a curse—life and death were set before them.

Let us then endeavor to ascertain a few of the most important features of Abraham's character and conduct, as a Father and a Master. "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."†

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\* Hebrews vii. 4, 6, 7.

† Genesis xviii. 17—19.

First,—*His behavior at home is inferred from his known character.*

The Almighty here, in order to impress our minds more deeply, condescends to adopt the language of men. “I know Abraham, that he *will*” do so and so. This is not only a natural, but it is almost the universal way in which we judge, and it agrees with common observation to this hour. It is on this principle, as safe as any which can be adopted, that the most judicious selection is made of an individual, or the most important charge committed to him; and it is on this principle alone that we often repose the utmost confidence, or anticipate the greatest good. “I know him,” said Jehovah, “that he will,” as a natural and necessary effect, resulting from his fear of me, “command his family, and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord.” On any express precept given to him, which Abraham might have been expected to venerate, Jehovah rested not—but on ground higher far than this, he *knew* that the patriarch would certainly proceed. So, when a man possesses the fear of God akin to that of Abraham, he *will* act in the same way: where this is wanting, whatever may be his profession, he as certainly *will not*.

Second,—*Abraham’s care over his family, and his affection for all under his eye, were to be discovered by his maintaining his authority over all.*

Of Abraham being a very affectionate man there can be no question. His bringing his nephew into Canaan with him, and the manner of his parting with that nephew afterwards; his memorable exclamation over Ishmael, and the language used by God himself, when he called upon him to surrender Isaac, alike prove this beyond a doubt. Yet, there is a more unequivocal proof of an affectionate heart; much more formidable than any temporary trial can discover, or any warm expression can evince. Such

a proof is here fixed upon—"he will *command* his *children* and his *household* after him."

Many persons complain of the cares of a family, and of the difficulties connected with managing their Servants; but let them be candid; let them do justice to Abraham, and see what a family was here! At one period of his residence in Canaan, he could muster not fewer than three hundred and eighteen trained or instructed Servants, all born in his house; and his household after this still increased. In short, the number of souls, old and young, under his care at one time, must have exceeded a thousand, and they have been rated as high as fifteen hundred. In such a household, too, there must have been immense variety of character. There were servants within and without, of the tent and of the field; men-servants and maid-servants; shepherds and camel-drivers. A number of these had come from Haran, in Mesopotamia, nearly five hundred miles distant; some were from Egypt, and the steward of his house from Damascus, in Syria. Now, in such a family, it is manifest he would meet with much to try the strength of his principles, every day he rose. In some he would meet with disinclination or reluctance, and in others with instances of disobedience. This indeed seems positively anticipated in the language of God, and herein lies the strength of his commendation. These were the very incidents which would give celebrity to his determined soul, and, in the certain prospect of them, the Almighty knew how he would conduct himself. His authority, when questioned, so far as the religious care of his house was concerned, could not be long concealed; and, when once discovered, this authority was not to be wrested from him. In such a well-regulated household, his interposition in such a way could be only occasional, but the occasion for it once occurring, he would certainly be obeyed.

Thus, all went on with as much harmony as the case would admit. There was no strife within his knowledge which he would not effectually heal. Between his own herdmen and that of his own nephew he could not bear it, much less in his own family.

Third,—*His authority was maintained, not for its own sake, but from his desire to reach an end, and that a religious end.*

Some men maintain a most rigorous sway over their families; but this is often only to give themselves ease, or to gratify an imperious temper. The Servants of Nabal, addressing their own Mistress, said that he was “such a son of Belial, that a man could not speak to him.” How different was the sceptre which Abraham swayed! The promised blessing of God on himself he highly valued, yet did he desire to stand upon still higher ground. This good man wanted *to be* a blessing: therefore did he maintain his authority, with a view to others receiving the good which he himself enjoyed. Well, it should seem, did he know that when Jehovah appoints to an end, he also equally appoints the *means* to that end; and therefore did he so conduct himself.

This fine character of Abraham is, however, the more remarkable, from the positive security which had been already given, that all would be well with him. “In thee and in thy seed,” had the Lord assured him, “*shall* all the families of the earth be blessed.” Now, a man of other or of inferior principles might have said—“What signifies it to me, what becomes of these many Servants of mine? My own name will remain, it seems, while the world endures, and my posterity are provided for by Heaven itself.” But no; he was a good man, and would certainly proceed as was supposed, that the Lord, in consistency with his character as well as his promise, might bring upon Abraham all that he had spoken of him.

Fourth,—*Such, on the whole, was the perfection with which Abraham maintained his place and character, as a Parent and as a Master, that success is positively anticipated from his exertions.*

In the whole of this passage of sacred writ, the reader does not find one hypothetical particle. “I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they *shall* keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.” Upon them shall *thus* descend the blessing of which the Parent and the Master was full. Now, this is an intimation and encouragement at once delightful and cheering to every succeeding conscientious head of a family. He that plougheth must plough in hope; but after this, if God’s word is true, and we are faithful to it, there is no quarter to which a man can bend his eye with stronger hope than to his family. Over the world, as such, he may have little or no control; his business, with all his ingenuity, may not succeed; but, assuredly, the man who treads in Abraham’s footsteps shall not be left without a blessing corresponding to that of Abraham.

As a proof of this good man’s success, I might point to a specimen of each class into which his family was divided,—to Isaac, his Son, and to Eliezer, his Servant, in themselves a host; though, doubtless, Abraham was the spiritual Father of many more,—but, as the character of each of these individuals is glanced at elsewhere, averse from repetition, to these passages I must beg leave to refer the reader.\*

Such, then, is the connection between obedience and success,—and though we have now to view a most heart-rending picture in contrast, the serious contemplation, as it is not less necessary, may not be less profitable.

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\* See pages 77—79, and 154.

## NEGLIGENCE AND RUIN.

In the circumstances under which Eli is first presented to our notice, there were included several peculiar privileges, from which a very different character and conduct might have been anticipated. Aaron had two sons, Eleazer and Ithamar; and although the names are preserved, from the days of that fine character, Phineas, the son of Eleazer, after whom, it seems, one of Eli's children was named, no mention whatever of the high-priest is to be found until Eli appears. This high and sacred office, which had all along continued in the line of Eleazer, for some cause had just been transferred to the posterity of Ithamar; and Eli, being his lineal descendant, was the first man of his posterity who had been promoted to the united honor of High Priest and Judge in Israel. The oracular voice in the sanctuary, given by Urim and Thummim, had for some time ceased; which was no ambiguous intimation of degeneracy, and probably of divine displeasure, either with the posterity of the elder brother, or with Hophni and Phineas. On these accounts, one might surely have presumed, that in Eli there would have been found much of prudent caution, of daily vigilance, and strict integrity. But, alas! instead of this—thus exalted in Israel, it was only to stand at the head of a list of human beings, not one of which should ever reach his advanced years, and many of which were appointed to die in the flower of their age!

After a perusal of the whole of this affecting narrative, we see a Parent, venerable in point of age and office, charged with, not what is generally styled, immorality in practice: we see him arraigned only for his failure in action, or neglect of known duty: we see how difficult it was to fix upon him a sufficient consciousness of guilt; and that though he was at last awakened to a sense of his folly, alas! it was too late for him, either to recover his

steps, or change the solemn and determined purpose of Heaven! Each of these features in this story require to be more distinctly noticed.

First,—*His failure in parental duty.* Throughout the whole of this sad tale, nothing else, and nothing more than this, is brought in charge against Eli.

From natural timidity, or the love of ease, he seems to have shrunk from exertion and trouble. Of authority he was in ample possession, as being not only the Parent of his children, but also High Priest, and even the Judge of Israel. Each of these characters equally suggested to him the importance of exerting his authority when it became necessary. Looking fully into the case, as a Parent he ought to have “restrained” these young men; as High Priest he ought to have excommunicated; nay, if they would not obey, and did not desist from such sin, as Judge belonged to him the awful duty of even pronouncing upon them sentence of death. Amidst such weight of obligation, it is, however, the character of *Parent* which is selected to illustrate the *extent* of his guilt; and certainly when that guilt is contemplated, it is marvellous that such a Parent should have been so blind and inactive. You see him go on indulging in effect, nay even conniving at the practices of his sons, till they had actually become “customs;” and it is not improbable that Eli might have often partaken of the food, so sacrilegiously obtained by them or their servants, now grown so insolent. But without noticing other sins, what *was* the nature of their offensive customs, so far as sacrifice to Jehovah was concerned? To them, as Priests, certain portions of the animal, excellent in themselves, belonged,—the breast, the right shoulder, and several other parts; yet, in wanton violation of this express and universal law, would they, or even their servants, seize instantly, or even by force, whatever they chose! The fat of these animals was to be burned, without fail, upon the altar of God,—a

ceremony which, by itself, was essential to the acceptance of the sacrifice, inasmuch as it was typical of the sacrifice of Christ, as well as expressive of the repentance and faith of the offerer. To this, as well as to the former regulation, they paid no regard; "wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord." Hence ignorance, or ungodliness and profaneness, if not idolatry, were sure to prevail.

Eli's failure, however, consisted not in entire silence. He was not afraid of telling his sons of their iniquity; and in doing so, he discovers his entire knowledge of their whole conduct. Nay, he remonstrated with them, and even set their guilt and danger before them in the strongest terms: "If a man sin against another," said he, "the Judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" But what signified words only in such a case? What was the use or value of his authority, if, on such an occasion as this, it was not to be exerted with effect? Therefore, though he thus remonstrated with his children, as he only remonstrated, for this he receives no token of approbation whatever; so far from it, he is just about to be solemnly charged, precisely as we do an accomplice in crime. But mark how difficult it is to rouse the mind even of a Parent, and that with regard to his own children, after a *course* of criminal easiness and neglect of duty!

Second,—*The various means which were requisite to convince him of his negligence and guilt.*

From his lethargy, Eli might, without doubt, have been fully awakened, long before the night on which Samuel so frequently disturbed his repose. If that dear Child ran to him, and awakened him not less than three times; even this was portentous, and, it seems not at all improbable, was also intended to stir him up, by putting him in remembrance of neglected warnings. At all events, he had



been at least as frequently called upon, before this period, to the consideration of his duty.

1. The character and conduct of Elkanah and Hannah were in themselves calculated to do so. The interview which he had with the mother of Samuel before he was born, proves that Eli was far from being insensible to the evil of sin in others; while the entire surrender and dedication of such a Child unto God, by both Parents, and their leaving him, at such an early age, "to minister unto the Lord before Eli," was a standing reproof to him, who did not scrutinize the conduct of his own sons, now fit in point of age, and under obligation in point of office, to devote themselves entirely to the sanctuary. I do not say, that he was altogether unmoved; for Hannah's present of Samuel seems to have made some impression. If Eli "worshipped the Lord there," after such a gift, it was well, but, alas! he is roused neither to a sense of his own danger nor his guilt.

2. Did he not hear the awakening language of Hannah herself, under divine influence, when she said—

"He will keep the feet of his saints,  
But the wicked shall be silent in darkness;  
For by strength shall no man prevail.  
The adversaries of the Lord shall be crushed,  
Out of heaven shall He thunder upon them.  
The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;  
He shall give strength unto his KING,  
And exalt the horn of his MESSIAH?\*"

3. A third, and far more solemn, premonition, however, awaited Eli, at the advanced age of eighty-eight, when a

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\* By the way, the reader may here observe Hannah describing the promised Saviour of the world, as a King, before there was any king in Israel; and first applying to him the remarkable epithet Messiah, in Hebrew; Christ, in Greek; and Anointed, in English; which was adopted by David and Nathan, Isaiah and Daniel, and the succeeding prophets of the Old Testament, as well as the apostles and inspired writers of the New.—*Hales*, ii. 332.

prophet of God came to him, and charged him as an accomplice in the crimes of his children, saying, "Thus saith the Lord,—

" Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy Father,  
 When they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's house?  
 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my Priest?  
 To offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me?  
 And did I give to the house of thy Father,  
 All the offerings made by fire of the Children of Israel?  
     Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice, and at mine offering,  
     Which I have commanded in my habitation?  
     And honorest thy Sons above me, to make yourselves fat  
     With the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?  
 Wherefore the Lord, the God of Israel saith,  
 I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy Father,  
 Should walk before me for ever:  
 But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me;  
 For them that honor me, I will honor,  
 And they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.  
     Behold the days come, that I will cut off thine arm,  
     And the arm of thy Father's house;  
     And there shall not be an old man in thine house:  
     And thou shalt see the affliction of the tabernacle,  
 Instead of all the wealth which God would have given Israel: \*  
     And there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.  
     And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar,  
     Shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart,  
     And all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.  
 And this shall be a sign unto thee,  
 That shall come upon thy Sons,  
 On Hophni and Phineas,  
 In one day they shall die, both of them!  
     And I will raise me up a faithful Priest,  
     That shall do according to all that is in mine heart and in my mind.  
     And I will build him a sure house;  
     And he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.  
 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house  
 Shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver, and a morsel of bread,  
 And shall say, Put me into somewhat about the priesthood,  
 That I may eat a piece of bread!"

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\* This appears to be the true translation; and accordingly Eli did see the tabernacle deprived of the ark, which was its glory, and lived to hear that it was captured by the Philistines.

After such an awful, such an heart-rending premonition as this, surely some effect will follow. Eli must be roused. But, no! if he even said any thing, it was not deemed to be worth recording: that he *did* nothing seems but too evident, from the fact, that seven or eight years passed away before another messenger was sent to him. At last, then, since Eli has trifled so long with parental obligations, and since he will not positively "restrain" these children, even this child Samuel has been reared up before his eyes to rebuke him. God had spoken twice, nay thrice, yet he had not perceived. Now he shall be awaked from his slumbers three times in one night, and then left in awful suspense until the morning, as to what awaited him. A man of God had been sent to him years before, and now, after ample time and space for repentance, there is sent to him literally a *child*. Conscious, it seems, of his constitutional failing, and of the sad torpor of his mind, at last he is anxiously alive and in earnest. "And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision. Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I *pray* thee hide it not from *me*: God do so to thee and more also, if thou hide any thing from *me*, of all the things that he said unto thee." Who will not admire the delicate sensibility of this child, in not saying a word till he is sent for; and his fidelity, in not concealing one word when he is questioned! For "Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him." But what did he say? More awful language he could not employ than that which Eli had already heard. No, certainly; but to Eli's ear it must have been more awful, from its being at once the dreadful *reverberation* of a neglected warning, and an

explicit testimony to the *sufficiency* of that warning. "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle."

"In that day I will perform against Eli,  
 All which I have spoken concerning his house.  
 When I begin, I will also make an end.  
     For I have told him, that I will judge his house for ever  
     For the iniquity which he knoweth,  
     Because his sons made themselves vile,  
     And he restrained them not.  
 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli,  
 That the iniquity of Eli's house  
 Shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever."

Yet, roused as Eli was at last to his criminal negligence, what did it avail? It is true, that nine or ten years are yet to elapse before he and his Sons die in one day; but there is a certain bound to imprudence and misbehavior, which being transgressed, there remains no possibility of redressing the grievance. To every thing there is a *season*, and a *time* to every purpose under the heavens. "It is further very much to be remarked, that neglects from inconsiderateness,—want of attention,—not looking about us to see what we have to do, are often attended with consequences altogether as dreadful as any active misbehavior from the most extravagant passion."\*

For nineteen years had Eli held the office of priesthood before Samuel was born: after this, a prophet had been sent to warn him in such terms, that one is astonished at his torpitude; for still he delays till Samuel is grown up, even to his twelfth year, before he is convinced and laid low for his remiss conduct! It now therefore only remains for the reader to mark the inevitable and awful results of Parental remissness.

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\* Butler.

Third, *The ruin which ensued from the negligence and torpor of even a religious Parent.*

As in many, if not in most cases, it does not comport with infinite wisdom and divine forbearance, that the punishment of neglect should follow immediately : so now we are to see, that “the delay of punishment is no sort or degree of presumption of final impunity.” Long indeed had the Almighty been of beginning, but now he tells Eli, and by the lips of a child, “When I begin I will also make an end.” After such delay, too, it is observable, that vengeance comes not by degrees, but suddenly, with violence and at once. In one day, Hophni and Phineas are slain, and thirty thousand men with them ; the ark of God itself is taken, and at this intelligence, before the sun is set, at the age of ninety-eight, Eli also expires ! Even his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phineas, apparently a good woman, can live no longer. On the same day she also dies, leaving an orphan behind her, to look back on this as the day on which he was born ! With her dying breath, too, she named him Ichabod, or *where is the glory ?* for she said, “the glory is departed from Israel.”

Long, however, had Jehovah borne with Eli, and long will he continue to testify to his guilt and sin. Many, many years pass away, when “in one day” again, besides Abimelech, the great-grandson of Eli, not less than eighty-four priests of his house are slain, with their entire families ! Neither man, or woman, child or suckling, is spared by the cruel hand of Doeg the Edomite. “The sins of pious individuals among Eli’s posterity would be pardoned through the sacrifice of Christ for their eternal salvation ; but the Lord had determined that no number of sin-offerings or oblations should prevail with him to continue that *family* in the priesthood.”\* On this account, we find that even this slaughter was not the final

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\* Scott.

testimony of his displeasure. On that awful day, David, in another part of Judea, was flying before the face of Saul, and though, in this case, he certainly did not deserve it, yet, fortunately for his comfort, one individual ran and escaped the edge of the sword. "And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests. And David said to Abiathar, I knew it that day when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy Father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard." Still the eye of the Lord must follow this descendant of Eli, and as a warning to Parents, so should theirs.

Eli's sin, let it be remembered, had consisted in honoring his Sons above the Lord—in despising the sacred character and obligations of the priesthood: and therefore, so far down as the days of Solomon, more than a hundred years after Eli's death, when the Jewish economy was about to shine out in all its glory; when the temple was going to be erected, and the ark, which Eli had so dishonored, was to become stationary in that magnificent abode; then must the lineal descendant of Eli be brought into view; and though of a high character on the whole, must he be excluded from the priesthood, and banished to his own estate in the country. "And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord God before David my Father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord, that he might fulfil the word of the Lord which he spake concerning *the house of Eli* in Shiloh."

After this we read no more of Eli's posterity. They

sink into oblivion ; though, without doubt, all was fulfilled, to the very letter of the prophecies which went before on him and his. As his Sons had run to great excess, their posterity must, it seems, be pinched with poverty ; and as they delighted to gratify a pampered appetite, their Children must another day beg for their mere sustenance : nay, at last, come and crouch even to the priest of the day, and do so, saying, "Join me to somewhat about the priesthood, that I may eat a piece of bread."

What a contrast, then, is there between Abraham and Eli ! Yet is this not a contrast between an eminently good and a positively bad man. No, it is a contrast between a consistent or vigilant, and a negligent or over-indulgent *Father of a family*. Eli's sad and melancholy case is mainly intended to admonish a Parent of the dreadful consequences resulting from his love of ease,—his negligence and procrastination, or his trifling with obligations so sacred and so important to posterity.

It is granted, indeed, and with some alleviation to the feelings of the reader, it is noticed, that one solitary gleam of comfort is found towards the close of this narrative, but it serves chiefly to make the surrounding gloom more affecting and impressive. Yes, though Eli had been long most criminally indulgent to his Children, to his guilt and folly he was at last fully awakened, and for nine long years, at least, he lived to lament both. So, on the eventful day on which his Sons and himself died, his principal anxiety seems to have been about the ark of God. "When he heard that it was taken by the enemy, his reflections on the dishonor to God and to religion, and the dreadful loss to his people, which *his* sins and negligence had occasioned, were more than he could support. Thus his death, under divine rebuke for his sins, has been a salutary warning to Parents even to the present day. Let it not, however, be overlooked, that, in the circumstances

of it, Eli distinctly testified his supreme regard to the honor of God above all personal or relative considerations: and, notwithstanding all his faults, he died in the exercise of love to God and his ordinances, and even it should seem by occasion of this. 'And it came to pass, when the messenger *made mention of the ark of God*, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck broke, and he died: for he was an old man and heavy.'\*\*

Still, however, after all that can be said as to Eli's personal piety or ultimate salvation, such is the contrast between the success which follows from a *Parent's* vigilance, and the dreadful ruin which ensues from *his* neglect of known duty.—Such the difference between the blessing and the curse of Almighty God resting on a Parent and his posterity! This striking contrast, therefore, I again repeat, will serve to show the reader, that there is no respect of persons with God, and that he is determined to act on the same solemn principles with his own people as with those who do not, in any degree, acknowledge his authority.

Let every man, therefore, have a care lest he imagine, that in the scheme of salvation there is the most distant approach to any thing analogous to what is called *favoritism* among men: and let every Parent especially learn, from the sad experience of Eli, that a man's personal interest in the divine favor will prove no security against the application of God's unalterable law, with regard to the connection between Parents and Children. Never, for one moment, let any Parent imagine, that, in one instance, or in any age, the richness and peculiarity of the covenant of grace can be supposed to invade the established government of God over mankind: since it is actually the grand and only preparative to its universal recognition and

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\* Scott.



establishment. When, therefore, Christian Parents are so judged in this world, it is that they may not be punished with the finally impenitent. "I will be his Father and he shall be my Son," said the Almighty to David, in reference to Solomon; but he added immediately, "if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of *men*, and with the stripes of the *Children of men*." And again—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth, and therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities."

In one word, obedience on the part of the Christian or the Christian Parent secures for him all the inestimable, the boundless blessings of God's everlasting covenant; while neglect of duty or disobedience only renders the punishment more weighty and severe. Let him be who he may, and his official station ever so eminent, "*He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind*," and the evils which he brings on his dependents, are doubled to himself! But the Christian trembles at the merciful forewarning of Heaven, and even in his own experience finds a monitor.—"For we *know* him that hath said, Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord;—and again; the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—"For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; visiting the iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

## SECTION SECOND.

### THE CAUSES OF FAILURE TRACED TO THEIR SOURCE.

The failure of Parents to be ascribed to a tendency of heart—displayed in undue severity—over indulgence—a baneful inequality of treatment—or sinful partiality.

HITHERTO we have been endeavoring to illustrate the nature of the Constitution in a human family, by bringing the light of divine truth to bear upon it; and this mainly with a view to Parents feeling at once the solemn responsibility and high privileges of their situation. There is, however, a mighty difference between things as they ought to be, and things as they are. “The heavens are the Lord’s,” and order has he there maintained. “The earth he hath given to the children of men;” and if we desire to see the use which they have made of it, we need not travel over any of its kingdoms. Enter into the bosom of a single family, where “the hearts of the Parents are not turned towards the Children,” and, consequently, “the hearts of the Children are not turned to the Parents,” and there we see in miniature a picture of any village, of any town or city, nay, of the earth at large, wherever Christianity does not prevail.

To return, therefore, to the Prophet Malachi: notwithstanding the admirable construction of the human family,

in his language it is implied, that there is a melancholy *tendency* to failure here, and that too a tendency of the heart. "He shall *turn the heart* of the Fathers to the Children." One party failing, at least, in the way of neglect, and the other in the way of disobedience. So when the angel of the Lord glances at this passage, he says,—“He shall turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.”

To begin, however, as the Scriptures do, with the Parent: Why, it may be inquired, should this ever be the case? Is there any feeling, under heaven, stronger than this parental love, or any upon which we may with more confidence depend? Does not the Almighty himself appeal to it, and even by reference to it, condescend to explain his own pity to his children? Is it not instinctive, and generally styled *natural* affection? In short, where can we find any feeling superior in power and in constancy?—To all these questions there is but one reply. This, like every other natural feeling of our fallen nature, must be brought under the sway of divine revelation; and not until it is regulated and promoted by divine influence, can it be pronounced in its healthy, and beneficial, and most vigorous exercise. I go even farther than this. Even after the dominion of sin has been broken; after the Parents themselves have been turned to the Lord their God, there is, alas! still in many, if not in all, some remaining *tendency* at least to failure. Nor is it impossible to account for this. Were natural connection all that existed between Parent and Child, the case would be different; but this happens to be nearly the strongest *moral* as well as natural connection which man sustains. This connection involves the performance of so many duties, and these require to be performed with such constancy and perseverance; with such a mixture of patience and firmness; with so much of tender sympathy

and self-command : in short, the milder and the stronger virtues require to be so interwoven, that without an imperious sense of obligation, daily felt, many affecting and even fatal mistakes will be committed.

This tendency of the heart discovers itself in courses entirely at variance with each other ; but almost every case of failure in Parents may be arranged under one or other of the four following divisions :

✓ 1. *Undue Severity*.—This is assuredly a most unwise extreme; since, after it is carried a certain length, and has continued a certain time, no subsequent treatment, by any individual, can completely, if at all, repair the injury. To whatever degree this is carried, the injury in such case involves a corresponding injury inflicted on the spirit of the Children, which is nothing short of a *vital* injury. In training even the animal creation, a greater injury cannot be inflicted than to inflame or *break the spirit* ; and in the instance of a Child, a being born for immortality, how great must be such a crime! Besides, according to the tender language of Scripture, men are cautioned lest they should approach such a point, as though it were the edge of a precipice. “Fathers, provoke not your Children to anger, lest they be *discouraged*.” After this, what can the Parent do ? He may change his conduct and caress, he may humor, but this only aggravates the evil ! By his blind and unthinking precipitancy and impatience, when correcting or restraining “after his own pleasure,” he has not only gone too far, but he cannot now retrace his steps ! He may repent, and even confess, but in many instances even this is all in vain. The period allotted to him, by the wise and unalterable judgment of Heaven, has been ill employed ; and though time there *was*, when, if his error had been seen, it might have been at least in part repaired, that time is now gone,

and gone for ever !\* Nay, what is truly affecting, if this Child happens to be the eldest, the Parent finds to his cost, that he has been the instrument of introducing a disease, like a fretting leprosy, into his family, which may, and probably will, infect the rest, while this Child remains with them. His sullen, unbroken spirit; his self-will, or, in some instances, sunk and melancholy frame of mind, they all too easily perceive; and the unhappy Child there continues the heart-break of the Parents, as well as the pest, or stumbling-block, or curse, of Brothers and Sisters. The Child, however, after all this, is not the *original*

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\* Whatever may be said of her vices, confessedly great, one of the most powerful minds which appeared during that awful tragedy, the French Revolution, was found in the person of a female. In the course of a single morning, the *last* mistake was committed by her injudicious and passionate Father, when brutally forcing her to swallow a medicine. From that moment the reins were gone, and many years afterwards she observed,—“I experienced the same inflexible firmness that I have since felt on great and trying occasions; nor would it, at this moment, cost me more to ascend undauntedly the scaffold, than it then did to resign myself to brutal treatment, which might have killed, but could not conquer me.” Poor woman! had she fallen into different hands, how different had been her future life, and though it is hard to say, perhaps then, even in these perilous times, she might not have ended her days, as she did, on a scaffold. On the morning referred to, Madame Rolland was not yet seven years of age! Her Father, at one moment infuriated with passion, and at another caring little about what was going on in his house, provided no one complained of his external intrigues, and that he had a good dish of coffee for breakfast, good soup for dinner, and some fresh eggs and a salad for supper—what else could become of his daughter? Yet this Parent has been styled a good-natured, peaceable kind of man! If any person has been shocked with the past or present relaxation of morals, in that otherwise fine country, let not this be ascribed to any *régime*, whether ancient or modern, but to its true cause—the dissolution of the Family compact—to the Parent letting go, or mismanaging, the reins of domestic government; precisely the same relaxation which preceded the flood, or the destruction of Sodom and the destruction of Jerusalem.

offender. The Father or Mother is, in fact, the guiltiest party; the Child's conduct may in various ways be traced to their negligence or misconduct; and it is indeed a sad spectacle, while they read their sin in their punishment, and carry this family-cross, from day to day, to find, upon application to their best friends, that their advice proves of no avail. I know of few errands more melancholy, than that of a Parent, when, at his wit's end, he goes, with reference to his own Child, to call on a friend, and ask *his* counsel as to what can be done! Such being but a faint and imperfect sketch of the effects of undue severity, let Parents take especial care, that however their Children should behave, all their conduct has flowed from a principle of *tenderness in the heart*, and been uniformly regulated by it. However the discipline and good order of an army of men may be maintained, neither the government nor order of a Family can be secured without this feeling of tenderness.

2. *Over-indulgence.*—After all this, it may seem strange, though it actually does appear true, from Scripture itself, that a more general and perhaps much more fatal cause of failure, lies in over-indulgence; at least the cautions against this, are far more frequent, and more pointed, than against the other. However severe the means may seem, at first reading, the following, among many other passages, at once detect the real *secret cause* of such indulgence, while they point to the infinitely important and merciful *end* of an opposite course. “He that spareth the rod, *hateth* his son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him *betimes.*” “Chasten thy son, *while* there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.” “*Withhold* not correction from the child;” let him at least have justice done to him, and give him at least this appointed security against future ill: “for if thou beatest him with the rod,

*he shall not die.*" "Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and deliver his *soul from hell.*"

Whenever Parents read such passages, it would be well for them invariably to remember that they were given by divine inspiration, and are not the elements of any human plan of education, ancient or modern. To reconcile them still farther, or to induce them to adopt these as principles of their own, let them only remember, that the Author of our existence has appointed different dispositions as essential and appropriate to different periods of life. Hence, if Parents really wish to see, in the future lives of their Children, happiness and usefulness combined, and, it may be, eminence of character and usefulness, then *subordination* during childhood and youth is essential. Have you not observed, that all these useful and great characters, of whom you have been reading, were under government in early life? nay, that in *proportion* to their future eminence, they were under corresponding subordination, either as to duration, or what men would call severity? Witness the cases of Joseph and Moses, of David and Daniel, and many others. The reason of this law of Heaven is not, like some others, inexplicable. He that has been accustomed to obey is best qualified to rule; the most dutiful daughter makes the best Wife and Mother.

Notwithstanding all this, and much more than this, owing to the perversity of human nature, unhappily it seems to many Parents, that over-indulgence is actually little else than an amiable weakness. "His children," say others, "are fine children; but their Father, *good man*, is too indulgent." Now, it has been granted that Eli was a good man; but what did this avail in the day of his calamity, when the ruin of his house, and the degradation of his family, were so directly traced up to *him*, and to *his* want of principle, displayed in over-indulgence?

The following passage is often quoted, without observing that it refers directly to a good easy Parent. "He that despiseth *me*, shall be lightly esteemed!"

This disposition in Parents will be found to arise from different causes, but when traced to its source in the heart, Christian charity for it is at an end. In some Parents it is to be ascribed simply to their eager desire after *present personal ease*, or gratification; and hence a multitude of false maxims become quite current in such families. "The children," says the Mother, "are too young yet;" and the Father replies,—"True, they are but children, and what else can we expect? Poor things! one cannot find in their heart to contradict them; do let them have a little of their own will. Alas! they will not always have this in their power." To crown the whole, "None of all this," says some injudicious friend, "*can* do them any harm, *provided* you are only careful when they come to be about six or seven years of age." Thus the good easy Parents sit down to enjoy *themselves*, perfectly satisfied that there is nothing wrong, and that not only no time is lost, but that it is not yet *time to begin*.

In others, over-indulgence springs from mere animal affection. They dote on their Children till they not only become a sort of "household gods," but the poor Children are thus daily encircled by an injudicious and blind fondness, till these very Parents prove to have been the first promoters of the self-will, if not the ruin of their offspring. All the pettish humor, and the peevish impatience, which, in future life, make them drag so heavily along, grew up luxuriantly under their Parent's eye; and they actually fostered and strengthened what ought to have been supplanted by other dispositions. Ere long the roots have struck deep, and, branching out into every avenue of heart and soul, it is beyond the power of nature to do any thing. Nay, I go farther: let the Children



even be converted to God ; and though a radical change then took place, which is confirmed to be divine, from its abiding, and habitual, and growing effects, yet it is almost certain, that the perversity of nature which, in Scripture, is called the body of sin, from its occupation, and the body of death, from its effect, is vastly more burdensome and grievous, entirely owing to the guilty easiness of these very Parents.

Thus, whether Parents regard the fine natural buoyancy of spirits, and the natural capacity, whether for bearing the ills, or enjoying the comforts of future life, as men and women ; or whether they regard their profession and possession of genuine Christianity in this vale of tears—oh ! let them beware of over-indulgence : beware of that false tenderness, which some indeed would dignify with the name of fine feeling, but which the Scriptures brand, most truly, with no other epithet than that of hatred.

3. *Inequality of Treatment.*—Having thus imperfectly touched on these two extremes, I still question whether the majority of failures are to be ascribed to either the one or the other. There appears still a more plentiful source of error and disappointment. It is not to be supposed that the majority of Parents do not think of their Children, and of their future well-being : but this is done *periodically* ; and great inequality, if not entire relaxation, intervenes between these periods. At these moments of reflection, oh ! could a *wish* but secure the end, the end would be gained at once ; but then they have as yet no *system*, which is, in fact, equivalent to having no *principle*. They are resolved, however, to have a plan, and week after week it is to be acted upon, and that with determined resolution. Many go not even thus far ; but whether they do so or not, all these Parents proceed without any fixed, that is, any conscientious *principle*. The

whole of their conduct may be described as a continued series of fits and starts; and upon careful inspection, it will, I presume, be found, that thousands, nay millions, of lovely children are ruined, merely owing to this baneful inequality. The Parents do not rise into such passion as the first extreme, nor, it may be, dote on their Children with uniform excess, or administer daily to their passions and fretfulness, like the second; but their conduct is not uniform, because they are not, themselves, governed by law, nor have they any *conscientious* regard to Him to whom they are to render an account. At one time they wink or smile at the little delinquencies of their Children; at another they evince want of patience and tender consideration. They smile, occasionally, when not one feature should have been relaxed; and, in haste or impatience, at another time, they not only frown, but perhaps chastise, when, more properly, they should have sat down, and calmly reasoned with the little creature; explaining and illustrating so as to prove, that *they themselves are affected by sin, and are afraid of it.*

✓ In one word, *their course towards their Children is not self-consistent*; and imperfect though it must ever be, if it is inconsistent with itself, there are few deficiencies which Children more quickly detect, and there is not one of which they *can* and *do* take such advantage. When the Parents are in a certain humor, then they ply them for favors and indulgences without end. When their Parents are not in this humor, they frown, or chide, or even chastise, but the Children are not humbled. No; they now know, that this is too violent to last: they give the Parents no credit for all their pains; and the day is coming when they will assuredly take the advantage, and by fawning or entreaty, they will yet have reprisals for all this storm.

So essentially, therefore, does any Family-government depend on a *calm and steady uniformity of conduct*, that

though the Parents be anxious in the highest degree, if they fail in this, as far as depends upon them, *all must fail*: since there is no treatment which will more certainly procure the displeasure of God, than that which consists in fits and starts of animal feeling. I might here ask such Parents to be themselves the judges, and answer—How would this do in a doctor with his patients? in a merchant with his business? in a farmer with his seed or his produce? and especially in a gardener with his wall-fruit when young, or his tender plants, which are daily sending forth feelers, that require to be supported? Ask any one of these, or ask all, and they will give the same reply. And is the health of the body, or the transitory business of this life, or the productions of the natural world, to have a care bestowed upon them, which you think too much or too hard with regard to the young immortals, who are now, by an indulgent Providence, committed to your culture and your care? The case is confessedly a difficult one: it is even arduous and full of responsibility; nor will any Parents acquit themselves who do not feel this. In many things, too, we offend, and in all we come short; but still there *is* a way, and but *one* right path after all. Were, however, uniformity and self-consistency only studied,—however slender the outline, were that never violated; had you certain fixed laws, which could not be broken with impunity,—though you interposed, and should interpose your authority seldom, were you, at such times, sure to be obeyed; then all might and would go on as smoothly as the different dispositions under your care will admit. Yes; I have said different dispositions; for when uniformity is mentioned, the same *particular* treatment is not intended: certainly not. The general laws may be compared to the sun and the shower, the heat and the cold of the natural world. Possessing these, the nursery-man proceeds to the study

of his plants. His productions are not one and the same; and the dispositions and tempers of the Children in one family-nursery generally, discover a variety as striking.

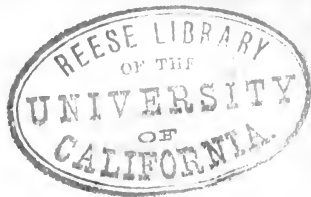
4. *Partiality.*—The observations already made, might seem to have anticipated the necessity of a distinct notice of this unnatural cause of failure on the part of Parents; and certainly, if the appropriate treatment of each Child, to which I have just alluded, is conscientiously studied, this will prove an effectual bar to the entrance of partiality. Of such importance, however, is this evil, that it must not be thus dismissed; for whether the family be large or small, the painful consequences extend, frequently, throughout the whole existence of the children, and are often most melancholy. Indeed, should there happen to be only two children, how do these brothers or sisters carry it towards each other, sometimes to old age? In such a sad snare, even the patriarch Jacob was caught, and what was the result? To escape the vengeance of his brother, which the partiality of his mother had excited, he became an exile from his Father's roof and his native land. Soon, too, did he suffer under the effects of that deceit which she had taught him; and which, even on his return to Canaan, seemed to endanger the lives of his entire family; nay, that deceit ultimately appears as though it had spread its baneful influence among his own children! Strange! that in a little community, where each individual Child stands in precisely the same relation to its head; where parental duty and affection are not grounded on opinion, but all have an equal claim on the equal regard of their Parents—strange! that such a feeling as that of partiality should ever be entertained and cherished. Oh! let, then, Parents be on their guard; for “of all the infirmities to which our nature is subject,” says a modern writer, “none is more unrea-

sonable, unwise, and unjust, than that of making a difference between one child and another. It discourages the rest, and ruins one—the favorite. It sets the Father against the Mother, and the other Children combine to crush the fondling.” Melancholy, in the extreme, is the prospect of that Child who has the misfortune to be *such* a favorite!

Finally, For every one in charge of a Family, it is indeed a most serious and important consideration, that, whether the tendency of the heart be to undue severity, to over-indulgence, to a baneful inequality of treatment, or to this sinful partiality, in all cases of failure, the evil will be found at least to *originate* with the Parents! Meeting, as every failure must, even at its commencement, with the corruption of human nature, there will then be faults on both sides; but still with the Parents the evil originated: inasmuch as to them belong the privilege and the duty, not so much of redressing evil when it has come to a head, as of sowing the seeds of character, of training the plant, of bending the twig when young and tender, of crushing evil in the bud, or of preventing the growth of what would prove noxious to the mind. Hence in representing to us the rectification of such a moral disorder in a family, the Scriptures direct us to commence with them:—“He shall turn the heart of the *Fathers* to the Children.”

Placed in a situation so difficult and responsible, where so much depends upon our procedure, refuge we have none, except in the wisdom that cometh down from above, with all its heavenly attributes. This alone can preserve us from extremes, and give us consistency, as far as may be in our present imperfect and sinful state. But then this wisdom must not only be requested, but there is only one way in which it *can* be obtained. It is a communi-

cation from above, bestowed on those only whose hearts are in truth *turned unto God*; for never can we love even our offspring as we ought, till we love God as we should. Until *He* has the first, *they* cannot occupy the proper and appropriate place in our affection and our care. To the following Section, therefore, I must now refer the reader,



### SECTION THIRD.

#### THE MEANS OF RECOVERY AND ESTABLISHMENT.

Deliberate conversation with Parents as to the absolute necessity of personal Religion.

I AM not insensible that this subject is of more importance than any which has preceded it, and that if I fail here, the volume I should account of very inferior value; but though volumes have been written upon it, I must rest satisfied with only one section.

Here, however, reader, instead of any formal statements, I would prefer to hold some conversation with you, if you have no objection to give me your ear, and something more. What I request more will be mentioned presently; and in the meanwhile, allow me first to say, that, a Parent myself, and acquainted with a Parent's heart, and a Parent's cares, and a Parent's difficulties, I feel in, you therefore all the interest of sympathy, and of anxiety after your best and your highest interests. If you are already not almost only, but altogether, a Christian, you will, I trust, see the force of all that is advanced as we proceed. If you have reason to suspect that you are not, or if you suspect that there is a deficiency *somewhere*, then suffer me to request your unprejudiced and serious perusal of what follows, more than once.

Whatever men may say, genuine Christianity alone can rectify the disorder which sin has introduced, whether into the soul, into our families, or the world at large. Upon this supposition, you may have observed that, in Scripture, some one striking feature of genuine Christianity is, occasionally, put for the whole: some one powerful effect is mentioned as an evidence of the existence of Christianity itself. So the "turning of the heart" towards our fellow-men, and especially towards our offspring and the people of God, if that heart directs to suitable measures, is an evidence of the heart being turned to God himself,—a generous effect, and peculiar to Christianity. The shipwrecked mariner, throwing out a rope to his companions who are still buffeted by the waves, gives not more evidence of his being now in safety, than that man gives of his own salvation, who, in a scriptural way and spirit, seeks for the salvation of others. From the manner, however, in which these expressions of Malachi are introduced in the New Testament, all doubt, as to their precise meaning, is taken away, and that by the angel of God, when addressing Zacharias, the Father of John. After intimating to the Parent that his Child should be filled with the Holy Spirit, as a proof of this he adds,—“And many of the Children of Israel shall he *turn to the Lord their God*; and he shall go before *Him* to turn the hearts of the Fathers to their Children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared” or disposed “*for the Lord.*” From this language you will evidently perceive, that the Fathers or Children referred to are such as had also *turned to the Lord their God*, and that, as a people, they were prepared or disposed *for the Lord.*

Scripture, indeed, my friend, at any time, never deals in half measures. It begins at the beginning, and that with the heart; dealing with it through the conscience:



insists upon it that the heart is diseased, and that to such extent, that an entire change *there* must be effected. Men may and do hesitate, and cavil, and so may you; but in these hesitations Scripture discovers no such sympathy as to recede in one page from what it demands in another. To come up, therefore, to the proper meaning of this language, uttered by an angel commissioned from above, nothing short of repentance towards God, and of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, will answer instead. No, reader, rely upon it, that nothing short of your returning back from sin and Satan, from the world and self, to God, your original happiness; as to your Sovereign Lord to be obeyed, and your best portion to be enjoyed, depending for reception and acceptance on the sacrifice and intercession of Christ alone; nothing short of this can you, with safety, rest in, when you hear of repentance towards God, and of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

A subject of the Divine Government, and one day to render an account of all the deeds which you have done in the body, yet, at this moment, under an invincible obligation to attend to this subject, I trust you will not object to my referring you for information and conviction, to the law of God itself.

Whatever men may think and say, when living in sin, or paying to this law only the homage of a passing regard; and however even some divines may confound this law with the thunders of Sinai, the majestic circumstances which once attended its more complete display, and formal delivery, it is worthy of your deliberate consideration, that nothing has been left undone to put honor upon it. When the God of glory dwelt in the Jewish temple, in the pillar of the cloud over the mercy-seat, this law, by his special command, was deposited in the ark, the holiest place in the holiest of all, as its dearest and choicest treasure. Thus was it done to the law which God de-

lighted to honor. But this, the greatest honor which *could* then be conferred, was but an emblem of all that followed another day. When God, our Saviour, descended and dwelt below, with a primary view to the divine glory, he placed that glory in the extent and purity of this law, as already illustrative of the interests and character of the Divine Government. Whatever darkness there had been, as to the manner of meeting its demands, so as to secure our salvation, in it he saw no darkness at all. No; on the contrary, He came to explain it in all its spirituality, nay, to obey it; thus to magnify and thus to make it honorable. It was during this obedience that the Father said repeatedly, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" it was during this obedience that the angels waited upon him, and admired, and worshipped. In the very prospect of this obedience, ages before, the Messiah himself had said, "I delight to do thy will, yea, thy law is within my heart;" and now, towards the close, you hear him again,—“ I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the *work* which thou gavest me *to do.*” Yes, under the weight and burden of his great undertaking, you will see that cordial love to the commandment, that zeal for the divine perfections and government, invariably took *precedence* of his boundless compassion for the souls of men; and be assured, my fellow-immortal, that *that* which was first in the divine mind, must, of necessity, have a corresponding place in yours.

And, oh! if it has such a place, then will this law explain to your heart's wish the *necessity* of a Saviour, and of *such* a Saviour. From Bethlehem Judah even to the place of skulls will you see him employed, in one unbroken design, of explaining and fulfilling this law; thus magnifying, and thus making it honorable. Yet after all, you will then add,—Great as this was, it was not more than the law deserved; nay, born under it, not more than the law demanded.

Now, certainly, of, at least, past indifference to this sacred law, you must be conscious, if not of present aversion? And is not either of these evidence sufficient of a disease of the heart? How are you able, after all this, or how is any man able, to dispose of all ideas, indulged too, of its strictness, or what you once vainly considered its undue severity? Are they not shamed away before the conviction of its unbending nature—its impartial rectitude? Has He one law for the rich and another for the poor? one for the old and another for the young? one for the illiterate and another for the learned? Nay, may I not add, with reverence, after this unspotted obedience and vicarious death, has He one law for us and another for Himself? Has he not now convinced you, that this unalterable standard is as it is, not because he has been *pleased only* so to reveal it, but that it is; *as it is*, because of his character—because he *is* such a God—because “the righteous God loveth righteousness, and his law is the truth?”

Without, therefore, any reference to a single act of spiritual obedience, which at present is out of the question, though the law admits of no other, converse, oh! converse, as for yourself, with this blessed, and perfect, and unalterable standard of all human conduct. Soon will you find, to your unconquerable assurance, that, so far from being free from blame, this law has been a domestic of yours, and an old acquaintance who has grown up with you from infancy, to whom, of all others, you have done the most violence, and used so ill. Nor is there any nation, or any man, where it is otherwise. The very heathen show the work and design of this law written on their hearts: its very fragments, scattered everywhere, are known by *their* natural notices, and these, exerting their influence by a sense of right and wrong, appear in their daily deportment. Placed in such circumstances, if you

look around you, one will address himself to your understanding, endeavoring to explain to you the nature of faith; dwelling, it may be, upon its simplicity; while another would address himself to your sense of gratitude, and represent, most unguardedly, one perfection of the Great God as, in itself, "most estimable," and therefore to be first received. The apostles commended themselves first to "every man's conscience," both parties being understood to be standing in the *presence of God*; and could we follow this method, I presume, more success would follow.

I, like yourself, reader, have been raised out of the dust but the other day. Into the divine presence, therefore, let me now invite you, and there let this great matter be explained, and, it may be, settled between us. Standing here, I have nothing to address to your fancy, or your sense of honor; nothing to your speculative understanding, or your disposition for religious controversy; nor, at this moment, any thing to your sense of gratitude.

You may recollect, that I said I should request your ear, and something more; it was conscience to which I then alluded. Yes; since I refer not to what is doubtful, but what is certain, I appeal directly to conscience. Secrets, in your own mind, there ought to be none assuredly *concealed from yourself*, and of me or of my searching you need not be afraid: at least I cannot ascertain so much as you might.

Have you never, then, in past life, had any misgivings of mind? And were not each of these the voice of conscience? Has your mind ever known depression, or foreboding of something painful, you knew not what? And what was this, if not the voice of conscience? Have you ever felt weary of life, and begun again? And what, to you, could this be, but the movement of conscience? Nay, have you *never* condemned yourself in the thing which

you allowed? And if so, how could this have been, if not through conscience? I appeal not at this moment to your heart: no; here let me remain in the passage to it, and entreat you to consider how much you have to answer to Him, in whose presence we now stand, for your resistance of all these misgivings, or this depression,—for your forgetfulness of all these forebodings and this self-condemnation. Fearfully and wonderfully made you are, but not less fearfully and critically situated. Surely you will not now shut the book, and leave me here alone? Bear with me but a little longer, and consider what I am now so anxious to add. Have you no concern in comprehending the nature and the extent of divine *authority*? Do you not consider that He in whom your breath is, and by whose power you now peruse these lines, has also unlimited dominion over you? and that you belong more to him than to yourself? And whither, I ask, can you go from his presence, and where will you flee when He appeareth? Do you wish to evade his eye? It is in vain. Do you wish to shrink back into oblivion? It cannot be. Go forward you must, and live too for ever. Registered as a subject of the divine government, you are duly observed; and your actions, and pursuits, and expressions, as duly recorded.

Surely, then, I may go farther, and ask Conscience herself, with her impartial finger, to point out the particular path which you have trodden so long. Has the Almighty no concern in that path? And though the Vulture's eye hath not seen it, doth He not know, hath He not pondered it all? Do you inquire my meaning? I refer to the sin or the sins to which you have been *most* addicted. The way—*your* way has a character all its own. It distinguishes you, and will distinguish, from your nearest relative, from your most intimate companion.

Do you evade all this, or say, as some do when pressed,

that you have sinned in *every* way? This I do not dispute: but your conscience even now tells you that you have not so sinned equally. No, not in every way *equally*. This you cannot have done, for no man ever did. You have had a preference—you have had a choice, a decided choice, even in sinning. What is it then to which you have been addicted? What is it which you have pursued? One sin there is, above all others, most frequent in your case. This generally, if not invariably, has one associated with it, which operates either as a shield to protect, or a covering to conceal the other from observation, or even from yourself. There is indeed, in some characters, what may be called a black and sinful threefold cord, but I believe most frequently we are drawn along by the reciprocal power of two master-crimes,—in thought,—in word,—or in action. Here then, my friend, is the *way* of *your* heart, and here the chosen sins which have furnished at once to the superlative deceitfulness, and unheeding wickedness of your heart, an appropriate channel. “See then *thy way* in this valley, and *know what* thou hast done.” It was Jeremiah’s grief, in times of old, that his countrymen would not look here. “There is none,” said he, “that repenteth him of *his way*, saying, What have *I* done?”

And what, then, in your case, reader, *are* those leading crimes? “But why,” you ask, “be so very solicitous and so pressing as to these? Will it not do to reply simply, that I am a sinner?” Did you say this with an understanding conviction of that in which the sinfulness of sin consists, and an eye fixed on the way in which you have walked, then this confession might suffice for yourself: but to my ear, my dear friend, it conveys nothing more than what thousands around us say, who evidently live in sin, and at last die in it! No man is a member of the church of the living God who cannot go along with her

in her confessions : so that, if you and I would be thus united, then must we be able not only to say, " All we like sheep have gone astray," but to add, with the church herself, " we have turned every *one* to *his own* way."

If then, as your most sincere friend, I can be of any service, why should I not press for a reply more definite, and apply to conscience? Conscience uninfluenced and suffered to speak out, will speak at once. And ah! what if this very reluctance *is* the resistance of conscience? Or if there *is* difficulty in comprehending my meaning, What if, through the blinding influence of sin, still cherished in secret, this should prove an evidence of your being, after all, indisposed to forsake your *way*. See now, reader, the imperious necessity of coming to particulars. For why should Scripture specify sin at all? Why specify particular characters? Why should the law be divided into *ten* commandments? And why should such infinite variety have been adopted by Infinite Wisdom in addressing the rebellious throughout the empire of God? Why, if not to convince of particular sins? How can any individual be convinced that he *is* a sinner, without being convinced of sin? And how convinced of sin, if not of some one in particular? "I had not known sin," said one of the most interesting men who ever professed Christianity, "I had not known sin, *but* by the law: for I had not known lust" or evil desire to be sin, "except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'" Thus the apostle found the key to his own character: but how can any man find this, and yet remain either ignorant or unimpressed, most painfully, with that one sin, or these sins by which he most frequently violated the divine law, and most frequently incensed the Almighty, and so often and so long presumed upon the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering?

Only confess then, reader, these the leading proofs of

your guilt, and suffer me to proceed: for an immediate use is to be made of these, and the knowledge, the conviction of these will be of essential service to your latest day. And how, you say, is this? of what use are they now? With these alone can I proceed as the leading evidence of your personal guilt, and the necessity of confession, and the ground of God's especial call to you in particular. These sins you may slight, but they are the proof of the *state* in which you now stand *before God*. Though by no means containing a full view of your case, these are the dangerous prognostics of your disease, and these may not only sink you to the grave, but lower still. To you also, even now, these sins especially stand in the same relation which the warrant for apprehension does to the man, who has been not only a frequent offender, but the very person charged with the crimes contained in that warrant. Nay, more, these sins, so often repeated, are to you the strongest proofs that you are already condemned. Perhaps you know the change which takes place in the condition of a prisoner committed for trial, if that man should be *left* for execution? Now, whatever you may suppose as to yourself, and whatever is to become of you hereafter, on you, my friend, that change, in the divine government, has already passed. "He that believeth not," said the Saviour, "is condemned *already*,"—he was condemned before—before Christ came, and so are you, though he has come! With the book of God in your hand, look steadily at these sins, whether of thought, of word, or of action, and you will find, alas! but *one solitary point* of difference between your own state, and that of those who are now in endless wo! On them the sentence has been executed—on you, *only* not as yet! Surely then "it is meet to be said unto God, I have offended, and *wherein* I have done wickedly I will do so no more:" for he looketh upon men, and if any shall say, I have sinned,



and have perverted that which was right; and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going down to the pit, and his life shall see the light." Apply even yourself to conscience, and hear what the Scriptures have said so long. "God now commandeth all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," and to you, my friend, he hath given abundant assurance of this, by raising him from the dead.

Yes, if it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, it was that "repentance and remission of sins should be proclaimed in his name among all nations." Yes, in his name, by his authority, and with his approbation, you are at this moment addressed. Repentance, however unwelcome to you naturally, which the law of innocence knew nothing of, and for which the law of God makes no provision, constitutes one-half of the Saviour's mandate or commission, or last and parting charge. One-half, too, and that the first-mentioned, of the doctrine which Paul, his servant, preached, not only in public, but, observe, from *house to house*.

It is however observable, that, though the law speaks not of repentance, it is the appointed instrument for producing that persuasion and conviction which lead to repentance: and as an instrument for this end, the law is invaluable. Once read with enlightened eyes, its doomsday sentence cannot be erased from the heart by any means, save one. And for what end is the weight and pressure of such conviction but this, that since as much justice or equity as there is in the law which condemns, so much of divine favor is there in the glorious remedy by which I am relieved? For you, therefore, my friend, to see the grace or favor in the one case, you *must* see the justice in the other.

Besides, repentance has an immediate reference to your specific character,—to *your* way,—to *your* thoughts: and as no radical change can take place without a distinct reference to the evil and enmity of the heart as *thus* displayed, so the truth of the divine law is invaluable as an instrument of conviction. For this end, among many others, it is *holy* in its own nature, *just* in its operation, and *good* in its effects.

The adaptation of this law for conviction is equally to be admired with the adaptation of the atonement to relieve. Nay, it is the burden of guilt, *thus* ascertained by *such* conviction, from which the atonement in every case delivers. Oh yes, the spirit of bondage, however it is deprecated by some and denounced by others, is, after all, my friend, a “received” spirit, as well as the spirit of adoption. There is great moral beauty in the perfect harmony of these two means. “The righteousness of God,” his one method of justifying you or any, “without the law is manifested; but the law itself and the prophets bear witness to it:” and while this obedience and sacrifice of Jesus relieves, *according to law*, from the burden and curse of a neglected, and abused, and despised authority, instead of blunting the edge of any man’s keen persuasion of his own personal guilt, the cross exhibits at once a Saviour to preserve from despair, and that view of sin which in the divine mind had been hitherto revealed in threatenings to be fulfilled, or shadowed forth in types and sacrifices which had not perfected as relating to the conscience. Yes, in Him who bled, and groaned, and died, however mysteriously, yet truly

There Vengeance and Compassion join  
In their divinest forms.

But that vengeance which was there unfolded belongs still unto God: and you would do well to consider it, as it is,

the prerogative of Him who thus bowed his head on Calvary. He is coming—and coming, too, as the Judge both of quick and dead, to take vengeance on them who, after all this, *know not God*, and *obey not* his gospel. You will be judged at last by Him who has been sometimes profanely called “the Carpenter’s Son,” though in this there was no disgrace: and rely upon it in time, He is too strong for you. Hence it is, that faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ is thus urged upon you and me in the Sacred Scripture.

Yes, in immediate connection with repentance towards God—the evidence of acquiescence in his character and claims, must ever be enforced,—faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ—our acceptance of his obedience and death, and our *exclusive* trust in these for acceptance with God.

Once separate these, and the glory of his incarnation and death cannot be seen. Even then, indeed, you may hear some speak of them as glorious, but it is not because of his having then met all the demands of God’s most righteous law, but merely because the atonement is suitable to our condition, and as containing good news, which, they tell us, must first be enforced, in order to conciliate the heart of man to God. But is this indeed an interpreter, one among a thousand? or does he show unto man God’s uprightness, that God may be gracious unto him? Certainly not. The basis of reception into the divine favor must surely be explained, ay, and received, otherwise the conciliation, so called, will be feigned and hollow. Can the heart be healed before it is broken?—Can conciliation possibly take place, before the loftiness of man is brought low? No, no, gratitude is neither the *beginning* nor the *end* of genuine Christianity, nor can the gift *be* received until the character and claims of the giver be admitted. Indeed, until the heart is touched with the evil of the sins to which the party has been most

addicted, the core of the disease must ever remain. Though help and cure are just at hand, it is pitiful and distressing, in the extreme, to see the wound healed slightly; nor, alas! will that heart, can that heart, turn unto God.

Nay, what is still more affecting, if it is possible for a man thus addressed, to abuse and insult one perfection of the Divine Name more than another, that perfection will be his *mercy* and his *good-will*, poured forth to us in the gift and sufferings of his own Son. Lean upon the cross, indeed, professedly he may, to save him from falling into endless misery; but one lust, his ruling passion, by that cross will he not crucify. A transient glow of animal feeling, mistaken for genuine gratitude, you may excite, without having referred either to the character or the claims of God, as God. But what then? The Israelites of old, as a body, on the banks of the Red Sea especially, were so affected, but two years had not elapsed before they were for turning back to Egypt again. The expressions of such spurious gratitude may well be preserved. The very song which these Israelites sung, being put on record, became a witness *for God against them*; and so, my friend, it must always be, where benefits are received professedly from God, without previous recognition of his character, and his claims upon us.

Nor will any analogy, borrowed from human benevolence and outward reformation, ever *reach* this case, or profitably explain it. Howard might perambulate the globe, and ameliorate; kindness and courtesy may, and will, if any thing will, soften the ferocity of felons in a jail; but the impenetrable hardness of the heart towards God is not to be, alas! cannot be, so softened. Of all the gifts his hand has bestowed, there is not one which has been *so* neglected, *so* despised, *so* presumed upon, as his favor and mercy through Christ Jesus. Witness the present state

of Great Britain. When, therefore, I approach towards this heart with a wish to save it, and turn it effectually to God, I must not forget the conscience, and that there is an *order* in divine truth, as there is a time for every thing under the sun. Let me state truth as I may, if heedless or indifferent about this order, all my toil is vain. "Let *favor* be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and he will not behold the majesty of Jehovah."

Nor is there any difficulty in accounting for all this. The truth is, that *that* to which the heart of man is so averse, is not any one perfection of the divine name to the exclusion of others; but since, in Scripture, all his perfections *in union* are held up as constituting the divine name or character, it is this *character* to which we feel, naturally, such disinclination. The stupendous obedience and death of our blessed Lord are suited indeed to us as fallen; and they *are* suited to our guilty and forlorn *circumstances*, but in no sense whatever either to our evil or selfish propensities. Until therefore the heart is affected by some persuasion of the *equity* of the divine government, a cordial and saving reception of the atonement, for the injuries done to that government, is, in the nature of things, impossible. In one word, the atonement was offered and accepted upon certain principles; and hence the necessity for the faithful interpreter of the divine record, commending himself to every man's conscience as in the sight of God.

To you, therefore, my reader, permit me to say, while your own character must by you be recognized, recognized in the way of conviction, and confession, and repentance towards God, yet *whatever* that character be, and to whatever extent you have gone, relief and mercy there is here for you, broad as all your guilt, and far exceeding your warmest wish. You may, nay, you have, by sin,

destroyed yourself; you have done violence to every power which God himself has created within you: but once acknowledge, only confess thine iniquity, and in the sufficiency of this atonement you may safely bury every fear; on this present and prevalent intercession you may daily depend. "For I came down from heaven," said Jesus, "not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me; and this is the will of Him that sent me, that *every one* that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

See that Jew, in ancient time, laden with guilt, with the prime of his flock approaching the gate of the temple, and inquiring for the priest—see them meet, and the one party, laying his hands on the head of the innocent victim; hear him now confess his crime, while the priest in waiting, bends his ear to hear—see the offerer receive the knife, and, like another Abraham, end the days of the finest animal in his possession—see it cut in pieces by the priest, salted with salt, and laid on the altar to consume—see a portion of the blood now carried into the holy place, and on the great day of atonement, into the holiest of all.—The priest has disappeared; but it is on this man's behalf, while he is left to wait and view his sacrifice consuming.—The offerer, however, can tell you how the priest is engaged. "Now," he replies, "he is sprinkling the blood; now he is repeating my confession; and now he prays for my forgiveness." An answer is obtained, and again the priest appears. He approaches towards the confessor—his sacrifice is consumed—the blood has been sprinkled before the mercy-seat—his sins had been confessed, while he leaned on the victim; and they have been repeated, with blood and incense, before the Lord. See the priest raise his hands, and hear him pronounce on this man the divine blessing!

Now, if all this is but a correct shadow of the blessings

to which you are now invited, then assuredly conviction of sin, and a sense of guilt, brought this man every step on his way to Jerusalem; and these occasioned his approach to the gate of God; and there he came for assurance of pardon, and to have his forgiveness sealed and sanctioned by the divine blessing. No such length have you to go; yet the same conviction of sin will ever precede the reception of that atonement, of which this sacrifice was but a shadow.

Or if, from these shadows of good things then to come, you would rather turn to the substance of them all under the New Testament, then will you see how and why it was, that, upon setting up his kingdom in the earth, our blessed Lord, laying hold of God's most righteous law, *began* by giving an interpretation of it, which, in point of spirituality, left all former expositions so far behind. Often have you heard Mount Sinai referred to, with much of terror; and no wonder; for so terrible was the sight and the sound, that even Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Yet, methinks, the mountain in Galilee, where Jesus sat, was the more serious mountain of the two. Still, "as lancing, and other severities of the surgeon's hand, far from being like the wounds of an enemy, are as useful and necessary a part of his business as his application of healing medicines;" so the Saviour began, on that mountain, to show, by his spiritual and rigorous determination of the penalty to the *heart*, that He, with his mighty grace, had come indeed to heal diseases of the mind. By such spiritual interpretation did He propose that every man should both find out and feel the necessity for his atonement. Thus did he fully explain the principles on which its necessity was built, and on which it was not only to be offered to God, but proposed for man's simple yet cordial acceptance. Thus, too, did he vindicate and magnify this ancient and unchanging record, and

show triumphantly, that "the law is good, if a man use it lawfully—*according* to the glorious gospel of the blessed God."

Yes, indeed, when Man should afterwards behold the Lamb as the visible representation of the invisible God, bearing away the sins of the world, or when looking over Mount Calvary to heaven itself, doubtless the Saviour meant, that the various perfections of his Father should appear conspicuously in harmony round that cross—Mercy and Truth met together, Righteousness and Peace embracing each other.

Surely then, my friend, the various attributes of the great and blessed God, with which formerly you were apt to deal, at one moment partially, and at another irreverently, speaking of one as being more estimable, or even more lovely, than another, must now appear in a very different light indeed? With which of these could you now dispense? "The very question," you reply, "is irreverent and ungrateful. My idea of God, when the atonement is *thus* introduced to my notice, is surely now at last just and correct, as far as it goes, on a subject so profound. God is Love, and all his attributes are but different modifications of love, or love operating in different ways." In all this I think you are right. Vindictive justice itself, whatever any interested party may say, is the love of order; and it is exercised for the welfare of being in general. The whole law itself, of which so many are afraid to speak; from which many feel so averse; and for which some professors, nay, even preachers, feel little or no occasion, is in fact founded in the divine character: it is a transcript of it, and has been summoned up in love, expressing the benevolence of Him who gave it.

"Besides," you continue, "having both found out and felt such a necessity for the atonement; understanding



now so far the principles on which it was offered, and on which it is freely proposed to man, I see also why it is styled 'the glorious gospel of the blessed God;' and surely I, in some degree, better understand the connection in which this expression is introduced in Scripture."

Now then, also, you may see how, and why it is that any man "made free by the Son, is free indeed;" free, to expatiate on the collection of the divine perfections, styled in Scripture, "the name of God;" free, to survey them in union; and free, to gather them up, reverently, by deep meditation, and then exclaim, "Who is so great a God as our God? He that is our God is the God of Salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death!"

The arguments contained in the preceding pages are applicable, without doubt, to the young as well as the old, to Children or youth as well as Parents; but as the former have it not in their power to act as they would in the Family circle, and the restoration of *it* is the object in view, I have addressed myself to those especially who stand at the head of families; to such as have already been invested with an influence and authority for which they are responsible to God; and which, as they are bound to use them for his glory, so they have an opportunity of immediately employing them on a constitution of things made ready to their hands,—a subject, however, which will be more fully considered in the following Section.

Here, therefore, our conversation may for the present come to a close. Once only possessed of principles such as these, sure I am that you will admire the Scripture characters of ancient time, as well as the goodly company who have followed in their footsteps. Like them, your principles will be unfolded, especially in your relative connections: like them, will you command your children,

and your household after you, to keep the way of the Lord : like them, resolve that you and your's shall serve the Lord, and, like them, will you often return to bless your house. Of you, too, even you, will God again condescend in effect to say, "I *know* such a one, that he *will* do all this ; and the heart, though conscious of a depravity to which it was before a stranger, yet the heart being now right in my sight, many other things will be right ere long."

## SECTION FOURTH.

### THE MANNER OF PROCEDURE WITH REGARD TO A FAMILY.

Introductory remarks—the importance of a right commencement.—  
The manner in which Christianity is represented in Scripture, as restoring the Family to its proper state—illustrated by reference to the ministry of John the Baptist, of Christ and the Apostles—the conversions to Christianity among the Jews in ancient time ; those from among the Heathen in our own day, and the final restoration of the Jews, referred to in confirmation of such ministry and mode of address—the duty of following such examples, imperious.

THE manner in which Christianity is represented, as addressing and restoring the *family*, and so, if possible, or if intended, the nation, where its families are in general debased or corrupted, deserves the most serious consideration. The language of inspiration implies, that the Parents, as such, are to be especially regarded. Next to the precise terms of divine revelation, the order of its language should be observed ; and, in the present case, this has become the more necessary, from so many *beginning*, I may say, at the wrong end. The commission of our blessed Lord is to be revealed to, and pressed upon, every creature, old and young, Parents and Children, individually, according to his command. The axe is laid at the root of every tree. But in perfect harmony with

this, in applying divine truth to a constitution of his own creation, there may be an *order* which is agreeable to his will; one to which he may have given his decided sanction in all ages: and if this should be apparent, it then becomes at once our wisdom and our duty to follow it. Let the *order*, then, of the following words, as well as that of other passages to be adduced, be studied:

“He shall turn the heart of the Fathers unto the Children,  
and the heart of the Children to their Fathers.”

By too many in the present day, and these individuals who possess both benevolent and patriotic intentions, it seems to be received as an incontrovertible and sound maxim, that, in order to the radical cure of a nation sunk in vice, or degenerating in morals, the first, if not the only hope, is to be fixed on the young and rising generation; and they therefore often repeat,—“We *must* BEGIN with the *Children*.” “If the Parents,” they tell us, “cannot instruct their Children in any thing good, and evidently train them up in nothing but vice; nay, if they will not instruct them at all, and if we cannot impress their minds with a sense of their obligation, (though in nine instances out of ten this has not been first and patiently done, in faith of its effect,) *all* that seems left to us is to begin with the Children. Besides, as far as we can see, the best, if not the only way, for reaching such Parents, so depraved, or so lost to a sense of their duty and responsibility, is through the hearts of their Children. At all events, beginning with them, we shall plant wholly a right seed, and the generation following them will reap the benefit,—the body politic being thus effectually restored to a sound and healthy condition.” Even a few eminent individuals have given countenance to this false reasoning, from their having, in a great degree, given up the generation “going away” in despair. To them, they seem so thoroughly

rooted and grounded in vice, that, if not altogether hopeless, they are, as a body, likely to grow together unto the harvest!

It is rather remarkable, that this strain of reasoning should make such approach, to certain ideas entertained by professedly wise men, among the most eminent heathen nations of antiquity. Aristotle, Plutarch, and others, were much impressed with the value and necessity of education, and, in the warmth of their zeal, they cried out loudly against the education of Children being left entirely to the mercy and disposal of Parents. They thought that this would ultimately prove a destructive injury to the state, and urged strongly that the public—the community—should take up the subject. “Why,” it was said, as they thought unanswerably, “why rest this wholly on persons who are so often found to be careless, or ignorant, or indiscreet, and by no means fit to govern themselves?”

Here, however, as Christians, let us be considerate. Did education, whether by Parents or the community, include *all* that God in mercy does for man, through the instrumentality of man, then would there be more force in the question put by Aristotle or Plutarch, and then would there be more plausibility in the reasoning quoted, of modern professors of Christianity or political economists. But since education, whether domestic or public, whether performed by Parents in person, or attempted to be performed for them, whether purchased by them, or paid for them, is not all; since especially the Messiah's last commission is still binding; since there stands before us, the sovereign appointment of the ministry of the word, for the conversion of men; then, in these expressions of the heathen philosopher, many in our day will see but the weakness, and hear but the melancholy wailing of a nation, at once devoid of Christianity, and destitute of

divine revelation; while, in the reasoning of modern times, they may discover only that two things are confounded, which are not only perfectly distinct, but perfectly consistent with each other, viz. the incumbent duty of Christian education, and the positive institution of Heaven for the conversion of men.

In any country where Christianity is in being,—where the Christian ministry exists, and the Christian revelation is possessed, to which appeal can be made, we must attend to the peculiarly important and happy circumstances in which it is placed. These circumstances I call happy, as affording the means which God has ordained, for the promotion of pure and undefiled religion. The impotence of the ministry, *as there and then administered*, may indeed suggest to well-intentioned individuals, the necessity of expedients to aid its impotence, or compensate for its inefficiency; but the impotence of any given ministry, is quite distinct from that institution, which, when administered, with wisdom, in its appropriate spirit, actually involves both the wisdom and the power of God for salvation.

Wherever, therefore, the intelligent Christian's lot is cast, when the restoration of a family, or the raising of a nation by religious and moral instruction, is proposed, the institution which God has been pleased to appoint and sanction for the conversion of men, whether publicly or from *house to house*,\* he can never agree to merge, in the moral obligation of man to imbue the infant mind with the first principles of the oracles of God. These are two things so distinct, that they must not be confounded: they are in perfect harmony with each other, and for each there is provided by God an appropriate sphere of action.

In reference, therefore, to the reasoning already referred to, let it be observed, whether it is not proceeding on the supposition, or upon the confessed or lamented

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\* Acts xx. 20, 21.

admission, of an impotent or powerless ministry; nay, whether, in the mouths of some, it is not overlooking the appointment of God itself; and whether, under its influence, well-intentioned schemes and plans may not be proposed and adopted, which may ultimately and seriously invade the *constitutional energy* of the domestic circle.

Let us, however, now revert to facts, and look back to other days. The land of Judea had frequently to mourn under a degeneracy of morals; nor could it be much more abandoned than it was in the days of Jehoiachin, who still went on doing evil in the sight of the Lord, after the king, his Father, with his servants around him, had, without fear, burnt the roll of Jeremiah the prophet. The state of the nation is even minutely described. The land was overrun with impurity; because of swearing it mourned. As a nation their course was evil, and their force not right. The great value and merciful intention of divine threatenings were alike despised; and the threatenings called contemptuously, by false prophets and a wicked people, "the burden of the Lord:" in short, both prophet and priest were profane; "Yea, in my house have I found their wickedness," said Jehovah. The land of Judea at this period also deserves particular notice, inasmuch as its sad degeneracy is traced up to one guilty source or cause. The people, it seems, labored under, not merely an inefficient ministry, but a pernicious one. "I have not sent these prophets, saith the Lord, and yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, and yet they preached. But if they had continued in my counsel, and caused my people to hear my words, *they had turned them from their evil ways and wicked imaginations.* Am I then God that seeth but the thing that is nigh at hand, and not that is afar off? saith the Lord. May any man hide himself so that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord. I have

heard well enough what the prophets say, that preach lies in my name, saying, 'I have dreamed, I have dreamed.' How long will this continue in the prophets' hearts, to tell lies, and preach the crafty subtilty of their own heart? Whose purpose is, with their dreams which every one telleth, to make my people forget my name, as their forefathers did, when Baal came up.—Therefore thus saith the Lord, I will upon the prophets that steal my word privily from every man: Behold, here am I, saith the Lord, against those prophets that dare prophecy lies, and deceive my people with their vanities, whom I never sent, nor commanded them. They will do this people great harm, saith the Lord."\*

The Parents here were certainly as far gone as they could well go; and what was the remedy in such a case? Though, to all appearance, in a desperate and hopeless condition, was there any hope of recovery, independently of these Parents, or were they to be reached only in a circuitous or indirect way, through impressions made on their Children? If, however, there was any remedy at all, what was it? "He that hath my word, let him *speak* my word *faithfully*: What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord? Is not my word like a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"† The Almighty, then turning upon those who ought to have known better, at the same moment tells the whole nation, by Jeremiah, if no one else would:—"The prophet, and the priest, and the people, which shall say, the burden of the Lord, I will even punish that man, *and his house!*"‡ For divine threatenings despised then, it seems there was no remedy, except calm and patient, but determined repetition—repetition of the testimony, and the threatening and the promise of God; but still in doing

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\* Jeremiah xxiii. 21—27, 30—32. Tyndal's translation.

† Idem xxiii. 28, 29.

‡ Jeremiah xxiii. 34.



this, I know not of a heart, however far gone, of which I can obtain a more powerful hold, than the *parental*, nor of a more powerful hold of that heart, than that which God himself here employs,—“I will even punish that man—and his house!”

For a few moments, however, let the consideration of the purpose of God, by the ministry of his word, be suspended, and the Domestic Constitution itself be again regarded. To the method proposed by some, of *beginning* with the Children, it might also be remarked, that, were a *constitution* of things founded in nature by God himself, with such designs in view, and existing alike wherever human nature exists, not standing before us; and were education to be summed up in the mechanical arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the communication of knowledge only, instead of its embracing also the communication of wisdom and the formation of habits, then some such theory might be applied, and its effects watched. But it is in vain to contend with Nature and her physical impossibilities. While the Child remains in the daily or even nightly *possession of the Parent*, how little can any such plan radically accomplish? and yet, whatever is done upon system, however kindly meant, which either at first, or ultimately weakens *this* connection, is a proportional advance to the brink of ruin; and take the Child away in a nation, and that nation is ruined. The entire fabric of society is affected; a *constitution* of things is invaded and broken down; and the God of all the families of the earth would rise up in judgment. No, human expedients, however specious, and beautiful, and well-intentioned they seem at first sight, often in the application prove hideous and cruel; and if they, I do not say, run counter to a constitution of God's own creation, but if they pass by, or even slight it, they will prove vain and weak indeed. In modern times, it seems to be unknown to many, that

whatever may be done for the Children of a nation, they will ever go on, not merely to receive a tinge, but to take their *character* from those with whom they speak, and eat, and sleep. To fall in, therefore, with the all-wise arrangement of the God of nature and revelation is our only wisdom. Such a course will secure his blessing and sanction, and with these, in the most desperate case, the utmost success awaits us, of which the case will admit.

Without hesitation, it will be granted by all, that, in proceeding to apply a remedy to a disease, to restore what is corrupted or decaying, or to rectify any disorder, ultimate success depends almost entirely on the commencement. If we begin wrong, sooner or later, we must begin again, wherever it is possible so to do. In such a case as the present, therefore, let it be our wisdom to begin with Men where God begins with them; and, in humble dependence on Him, if we have his *word*, and speak it *faithfully*, let no man's heart fail him: the same cause will produce the same effect. He will turn the heart of the Fathers to the Children, and the heart of the Children to their Fathers, and employ us, too, blessed be his name, in doing so.

Nor is there in this case any thing unusual, or any thing which is not done in every other case analogous to it, whether for the rectification of evil, or the production of good. Hence, when nations are sunk in depravity, their *Rulers* are addressed; when churches are corrupt, their *Pastors*: the leader of an army is held responsible for his men; the guide and supercargo of a vessel, for the vessel itself, and all on board.

For the prevention of evil the same method is pursued. Hence, while God *himself* wrote the ten commandments, thus strongly marking their permanency and universal obligation, he ordered *Moses* to write down all the judicial and ceremonial precepts peculiar to the economy of which

*he* was to have the charge. Hence, the degeneracy of Israel as a nation was removed or retarded by Judges who judged, or Kings who ruled over them. Hence, to the kings in general over the Jews, it was said,—“And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that *he shall write him* a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the Priests and the Levites; and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren; and that he turn not aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left; to the end, that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, *he, and his children*, in the midst of Israel.”\* Hence Paul, unable to reach the Church itself, sent for its *Elders*, and said, “Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers.” Hence, when the seven churches in Asia were addressed by the Saviour, he desired his address to be sent to the *angel* of each; and when Paul would provide for the future purity and prosperity of the Church of Christ, he sits down and solemnly addresses himself to *Timothy* and *Titus*.

If this, however, is the mode of procedure to which the Author of Nature and the constitution of things alike direct us, we shall not be left without reasons, both powerful and striking, for our pursuing it; and especially with regard to a family. As a specimen, let the two following considerations be duly weighed:

1. Observe the difference between what is requisite and generally adopted, for the ascertaining of guilt, and for the conviction of sin, once ascertained or confessed.

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\* This law was probably but very seldom observed by the Kings of Judah, and never by the Kings of Israel. Observe the consequences.

The manner in which the Lord himself proceeded, upon the very entrance of sin into our world, affords an illustration of this difference, at once safe and satisfactory. Proceeding to ascertain the painful and awful case, and in a way of condescension to human nature, now, alas! fallen, His voice first strikes upon the ear of Adam, who at once admits that he was afraid and ashamed, but refers to the woman, who endeavors to shift the blame, by a reference to him who was most guilty. But the respective guilt of each party once ascertained, this order is reversed; and in pronouncing sentence of condemnation, with a view to our first Parents reading their sin in their punishment, Jehovah begins with Satan; then pronounces sentence on the woman; and finally on Adam.

Now, were it not already ascertained, beyond a doubt, that Parents have been *first* in fault; that they have been not only most negligent and most guilty, but the cause of their Children's ignorance and bad habits; then would it seem, not only proper, but even necessary, to begin with the party who has been led astray, and less guilty, as Jehovah did. But between the process necessary for the ascertaining with whom the chief guilt rests, and that which is incumbent on us for the radical conviction of sin in the group itself, there is such a material difference, that it is generally found necessary to proceed in two ways, directly opposite.

2. Observe also the difference between what I may style ascending and descending love.

Descending love ought to exist to a much greater degree, since it is capable of being carried to a much greater extent, than ascending. As the love of God descending is infinitely greater than that which does or which can ascend to him in return; so the love of man, which descends to the young and to posterity, or the love of care over them, is, or may be, much greater than that

which does or which can return or ascend ; and, as in the former case, the first is not only first in the order of time, but produces and promotes the second, so it ought to be in all cases which bear any analogy, and much more in a case like the present, which bears such analogy.

The truth, therefore, seems to be, that, in whatever way this subject is viewed, in the case of a debased or disordered family, the main offence, the chief amount of guilt, lies with the Parents. The evils and the inconvenience suffered by a country, in consequence of the ingratitude and disobedience of its Children towards their Parents may be great, but they are, literally, after all, but few and light indeed, in *comparison* with the evils and distress which it suffers from the remissness or neglect of which Parents are guilty towards their offspring. The influence which is peculiar to them, in depressing or elevating a nation, is not only prodigious—it is incalculable.

Now, were there no instrument expressly appointed, or peculiarly adapted, for bearing down directly upon a body so potent as this, we should feel helpless indeed in all our attempts after a better day. But a remedy assuredly there is, of peculiar adaptation to the character and position of a Parent. Hence, even in the two considerations just stated, we have in one the argument of *greatest sin*, and in the other the argument of *strongest obligation*. Hence the warnings, the threatenings, the arguments for conscience, furnished to us in Scripture for the parental ear, are so peculiarly adapted to the responsible, and, if guilty, the perilous situation of a Father or Mother.

Here, however, we are evidently again thrown back on the ministry of the word ; on the commission of our Saviour, still sounding in the ear ; and on obedience to it, whether publicly, or from *house to house* ; as well as the necessity for implicit faith *on our part*, in God's own

instituted and determined way of proceeding with his apostate family.

It is indeed very possible, as I have already hinted, that the extreme impotency of preaching in our day, may have induced benevolent men to look about, and see whether any other, or, at least, additional means could be devised for keeping down immorality, and suppressing vice, and exterminating juvenile delinquency. Had senior delinquency been especially regarded, and inquiries been instituted on the part of individuals whom it most concerns, into the cause of the impotency referred to, I am firmly persuaded, that greater progress would have been made in what many profess to desire, and all agree to be necessary. At the same time, as I have already remarked, the impotency of any given ministry, in any country, is one thing, the institution and appointment of God another; and when I hear such a man as John Howe lamenting over this impotency, even in his day, but still magnifying the appointment itself, and confidently anticipating a brighter day, by means of this, when God shall, by his servants, justify the power and the wisdom of his own institution; I know not that any man, in such circumstances, could do much better, than adopt his sentiments, and try to imbibe the spirit which such a man possessed.\*

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\* "I remember," says an American author, "a remarkable passage of the late learned Mr. Howe, which I think it may be worth while to transcribe here. It is in his Discourse concerning the prosperous state of the Church, before the end of time, by a plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit. 'In such a time,' says he, 'when the Spirit shall be poured forth, surely the Ministers of Christ shall have their proportionable share; and when such a time as that shall come, I believe you will hear much other kind of sermons, or they will, who live at such a time, than you are wont to do now-a-days; souls will surely be dealt with at another rate. It is plain, too sadly plain, that there is a great retraction of the Spirit even from us. We know not how to speak living sense into souls; how to get within your minds: our words die in our mouths, or drop and die

To return, however, more directly to the Parents and Children. "Is not all this," some man may still say, "only a delightful dream? Not as yet," he continues, "am I able to point out to you any triumphant instance

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between us and you. We even, as it were, faint when we speak; long-experienced unsuccessfulness makes us despond: we speak not as persons that hope to prevail; that expect to make you heavenly, or mindful of God, and to walk more like Christians. The methods of alluring and convincing souls, even that some of us have known, are lost from amongst us in a great part. There have been other ways taken than we can tell now how to fall upon, for the mollifying of the obdurate, and the awakening of the secure; for the convincing and persuading of the obstinate, and the winning of the disaffected. Surely there will be a large share that will come even to the part of Ministers, when such an effusion of the Spirit shall be as it is expected. Then they shall know how to speak to better purpose—with more compassion—with more seriousness—with more authority and allurements, than we now find we can.' "

Agreeably to the just expectation of this great and excellent man, continues this writer, with reference to the people of New England, we have found it in this day:—"A number of preachers have appeared among us, to whom God has given such a measure of his Spirit, that we are ready sometimes to apply to them the character given of Barnabas. The doctrines they insist on are the doctrines of the Reformation, under the influence whereof the power of godliness so flourished in the last century. The points on which their preaching mainly turns are these important ones of man's guilt, corruption, and impotence; supernatural regeneration by the Spirit of God; and free justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ. The manner of their preaching is not with the enticing words of man's wisdom; howbeit they speak wisdom among them that are perfect. An ardent love to Christ and to souls warms their breasts, and animates their labors. God has made these his ministers as a flame of fire in his service; and his word in their mouths has been 'as a fire, and as a hammer which breaketh the rock in pieces.' In most places, God has evidently wrought with them. Such a power, and such a presence of God in religious assemblies, has not been known since God set up his sanctuary amongst us. He has indeed 'glorified the house of his glory.'"—*See the Works of President Edwards*, vol. viii. 581—588; and *Howe's Works*, vol. v. throughout.

of a community raised permanently, by the opposite method; but are you able to show me the operation and the effect of that which you now recommend?"—To such an individual I reply, with my Bible in my hand, happily I am; and to such an instance also, as should, and, I believe, must become at once the guide and encouragement of all nations, in *any* condition, and in *every* age.

For both proof and illustration, I have no objections to be confined to the literal fulfilment of this very prophecy. To the blessed day, when John began, when Jesus perfected, and his Apostles followed, in turning the heart of the Fathers to their Children. Much of proof, indeed, I think, has been already adduced; but it is more than merely worth our while to take another view of this subject, in a more distinct and connected manner.

Carry your eye, then, along the delightful stream of the New Testament narrative, from the moment when you discover, in the wilderness of Judea, "the waters break out, and streams in the desert." On either side you will see Family connections and Family groups bestirred and changed, and the parental heart especially, vibrating in all its tenderness.

But we have been urging the importance of a right *commencement*; let us try it here. On looking back to the origin of the triumph of Christianity, at once we are introduced to two Parents, and are carried home to the very bosom of a Family. It was fit that the man alluded to by the last of the Prophets, and who was first to be so employed, should himself be the Child of such Parents. His Father and Mother, "Zacharias and Elizabeth, were both righteous before God, and were walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," when, in answer to their supplications, Jehovah promised them *such* a Son. In fixing on the man who was to ac-



comply with such a prophecy, we see the Lord himself regard the Parents first. To turn the hearts of such Parents to such a Child of Promise was not necessary; but how great were the benefits which, on entering into existence, he must have enjoyed in such a Father and Mother! The little Child “grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the desert till the day of his showing unto Israel.” Receiving no education from the Jewish Scribes, nor attending on any sacerdotal services of the sanctuary, with his Parents’ example before him, and under their tuition, he was prepared for his great undertaking. At last, John being about thirty years of age, quitting the hill country, and coming down by the wilderness of Judea to the plains of Jordan, the nation is found in the precise state glanced at by the last of the prophets. Like “the barren fig-tree,” to which our Lord afterward compared it, it is “nigh unto cursing:” and in the ministry of John, we see the last remedy applied, before “smiting the land with a curse.” Out of this nation, far gone as it was, he was to turn many unto the Lord their God,—“to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, the heart of the children to the fathers, and make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

In his manner of proceeding there is something at once noble and awful; something which draws at once on our fear and love. To the hardened or hypocritical character of man, *fully formed*, he at once addressed himself, and, grappling with the vain refuge of the day, he says,—“Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our Father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up Children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid to the root of the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire”—is to be changed into fuel. Nor, as though he had said, think me severe, for there cometh one after me, who will be severer still: “whose fan is in

his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

This extraordinary man was cut off by a violent death, but not in the *midst* of his usefulness, as is often erroneously said by us ; for no good man is ever *so* cut off ; his work was certainly done, though we be surprised and justly grieved at his unexpected call. Before John died, however, nay, long before he was cast into prison, he knew that he had not labored in vain. One day the Jews informed him, not with amiable intentions ; " Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and *all men come to him.*" This to the harbinger was glad tidings indeed, as appears by his reply, though they could not see its meaning. " He must increase," said John, " but I decrease ;" and so his ministry at last merged in that of his Lord and Master.

In describing the ministry of the Messiah and his harbinger, though both were to be employed in the conversion of men, it is worthy of notice, that neither Malachi nor the other Prophets describe them in the same terms. The merciful severity, and the grace of their respective ministries, were, in one sense, addressed to all. But that of John had to do with the common people—the mass—the publicans and harlots—the dregs of the nation. And here was the sink—" the rock and the hole of the pit," from whence the church, the temple of Jehovah, was to be raised. But then, these were led *astray*, and beguiled by another class ; the sons of Levi—the Scribes—the Pharisees, the Sadducees of the day. These were in reserve for Jesus ; and over them he sat down in judgment, as a refiner and purifier of silver does over his furnace. The day of vengeance was in his heart, and the year of his redeemed was come. To these parties he drew near,

and was a swift witness against them, after John, like another woodman in the forest, had laid his axe to the root of every tree. The day was come, when the proud, and all that did wickedly, were like stubble: and the day had come, too, when bitter animosities and cursed selfishness were to give way before the mighty agency of God's own word. Yes, the day when, though the springs of social and domestic life were poisoned, the tender ties of blood and affinity violated, all should yield to the irresistible energy, the "fire and the hammer" of divine truth. "The Law and the Prophets," said Jesus, "were until John; from that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every one *presseth* into it." Oh, my reader, how could it be otherwise, under preaching where the sense of danger was so produced, where the sense of obligation was so enforced, and the sense of advantage so held up to all?

Full well, indeed, did the Saviour know the degenerate state of that nation at this melancholy period. So, when he sent out the twelve, he represents them as sent out to the human eye, defenceless, and more likely to be devoured by their countrymen, than instrumental in their conversion. "Behold," said he, "I send you forth, as *sheep* in the midst of *wolves*." Yet did this not prevent him from addressing himself, through them, in the first instance, and in the most solemn manner, to the *heads of families*. The language is too remarkable not to be quoted. "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house salute it: and if the house be worthy, let your peace rest upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you." When He sent out seventy others, after the apostles, the same method is pursued. "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house: and if a son of

peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house *remain*, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go *not* from house to house."

Read the whole passage in both cases, and then say what could be the design of these minute directions, so pointedly delivered. Was not all this just saying, in effect, "In this nation apostacy hath intervened, but an interest in it, for God, I will raise up notwithstanding? Yes, my object is to raise up, within every city or town where you go in some one *family*, at least, an interest for myself. A welcome, and nothing more, I ask. There, shake yourself free of every encumbrance,—exercise self-denial,—change not your abode on account of any personal inconvenience whatever,—interest, if possible, at least the whole of that one family in my approach, and show to all that you have one, and but this one, object at heart: and as you are going into every city and place, to which I myself will follow, secure for me an entrance at least into some one solitary family, and even in a city, at first, I ask no more! Thither I myself will come, and finding your peace resting upon it; that peace assuredly shall not decline."

These, no doubt, were only preparatory measures; but the line of operation is in perfect harmony with all that has been advanced; and *as* preparatory, they show how he proposed to pierce into the corruption of a nation, and take out of it, a people for his name.

Here, however, let us pause a moment, and observe what a gloomy, what an appalling prospect presented itself to our Redeemer, in such a land, and at such a time! Obstacles of the most formidable character he had full in view. The domestic constitution itself, as well as the Mosaic economy, both of divine appointment; the latter

temporary, but the former of more ancient obligation, and never to be dissolved; as then corrupted and abused, he saw standing in his way. Yet did the Messiah propose to raise up in the very heart of Judaism, and in the bosom of the Jewish family too, an interest for himself, an interest for God. The whole family, both old and young, Parents and Children, were invited and entreated to submit, but one individual only in that family might accept the boon! This the Redeemer foresaw, and for such an event he made provision. It was a strong case,—it might surprise the disciples,—it might shake the resolution of the convert himself,—but, when the genius and design of the domestic constitution are regarded, no language *could* more powerfully have explained to us the paramount importance of his cause and claims, than that which the Saviour employed. “Think not,” said he, “that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” As though the Redeemer had said,—“If it *must* come to this, whether I or the dearest earthly connections are to be followed and obeyed, then, in all cases, there is no alternative; and be not discouraged, even for this most trying sacrifice, I can, and I will, make ample amends.”—“Every one who hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” Language could not convey more strongly, the peculiar distinction between the Jewish dispensation, and the kingdom now setting up by the God of heaven. Under the former, for wise and

important reasons, the family constitution could not be invaded, much less broken up with impunity: but now that the Messiah himself hath come, the seed to whom the promises were made, if it *must* be so, then it seems it might be, and with great personal advantage: an hundred fold, even in this life, of abounding consolation, when such great sacrifices were made, and great trials endured, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

This virulence of persecution, however, might, and actually did, spend its force; yet the same thing might happen: a single branch, a Father or Mother only, in a single family, might be converted to Christianity, and if persecution was not carried to extremity, the path of duty should be pointed out,—and, in the progress of divine revelation, so it is. Under the Jewish economy, the Man, *with all his Family*, must conform, or the Man, *with all his Family*, be expelled, nay, in case of resistance or non-compliance, his very substance must be forfeited, as well as himself separated from the congregation. Ezra x. 3 and 8. But now, “as in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availed any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,” or the keeping of the commandments of God; so the Husband might be received into the household of faith, though his Wife should not, would not follow, or the reverse. In such case, however, the strong natural tie of God’s own institution, far from being violated, might, through the kind and gracious and plastic power of Christianity, be turned to great account. “If any brother hath a Wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away: and the Woman which hath an Husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving Husband is sanctified by or in the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is sanctified by or in the Husband: else were your Children unclean; but now

are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A Brother or a Sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace; for what knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? or how knowest thou, O Man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?"

Could any language be more explicit, and satisfactory, or consoling, or discover a more tender regard for the domestic circle? Thus the best interests of the Children were secured, by the continuation of the marriage-contract, while the delightful prospect is held out, of the Husband or Wife being the instrument, in the hands of a gracious God, of *saving* the other. Under the Jewish economy such an arrangement was impossible, "but *now*" it is otherwise; and hence the enlargement of privilege here announced. Once on a time, the Children of the Jewish Parent were to be cast out, and even the Wife separated; nor was there "hope in Israel concerning this thing," but upon the trying supposition of such a separation. "Now, therefore," said they, "let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the Wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my Lord (Ezra), and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done *according to the law*. Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it." What a severe trial must this have been! Still it was then imperiously necessary: but now—the Wife may, nay, if she is so disposed, must, remain, and all the benefits of this Christian economy may descend on the whole family, in consequence of the piety and prayers, the consistent conduct and assiduous endeavors, of only *one* Parent!

To return, however, to the actual operations of the Messiah and his forerunner. Much, I know, has been said of the non-success of Jesus and of John, but the

*event* proved that this was only apparent. The truth is, that both were employed about foundation work, and about such a foundation! "Other Men," said Jesus, "have *labored*, and ye are entered into *their* labors." In these words, especial reference was had to himself, and perhaps to John; but this was his divinely humble manner of making such reference.

Even in the days of the Redeemer, however, we have proofs, *all in character*, of the faithful, and laborious, and well-directed labors of John, now gone to his reward, as well as of Jesus, now on the way to his. Corrupt and evil as the times were, parental feeling, at least, is seen in most affecting display; nay, it seems as if it were the only cord in the human heart which responded to the touch of Jesus; and, when reading the evangelical history, we are often left to repose on it alone, as the surest hope and symptom of a better day. Here, the Parents intercede for their child—one comes on behalf of his only son, and another on behalf of her only daughter! Nor is it individuals only, who press round the adorable Redeemer: there, in company, the very Women bring their Children to him to be blest. He takes them up in his arms, lays his hand upon them, and blesses them, after having uttered these most gracious and delightful words, which, since he spake, have gladdened the heart of millions of Christian Parents: "Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." In a word, in the evangelical history, among all the travels of our blessed Lord, excepting only one instance, the *strongest* faith with which he met was the faith of Parents, and two cases in particular are most eminent. The one a Mother, the other a Father. The one a Jew, a ruler of the synagogue, and the other a solitary descendant of Canaan's devoted race. The Jewish Parent believed that his Child might be even



raised from the dead, and therefore, with his partner in life, was present when this was done: and to the other, the Saviour could not, and at last would not, by any means, suppress the utterance, even of his admiration. "Oh, Woman," said he, "great is thy faith!" At other times we see him take a single branch of a single family, and turn it to great account. The demoniac beyond the sea of Galilee, who had not only been the grief of his family, but the terror of the neighborhood, would have left all and followed the Saviour, when He was entreated to depart out of their coasts. "Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but said: *Go home*, and tell thy friends how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion upon thee." He did so; and by the next time that his heavenly Physician visited those parts, this grateful patient had made room for him. Far from beseeching Jesus to depart, the whole country was moved with one accord,—those in health carrying to him those in sickness; and the sick persuaded, that, if they might but reach the hem of his garment, all would yet be well. Nor were they disappointed, for "as many as touched him, were made perfectly whole."\*

Nor was it only in the days of the Messiah himself, that we see this prophecy of Malachi fulfilled in *character*. Hence, among the deeds of the apostles, we find recorded the interesting cases of "Lydia and her household"—of "the Philippian jailor and his house"—and the "household of Stephanas." All these were the heads of families, and in these fine cases, too, we see both members of this prophetic declaration fully and literally accomplished. The hearts of the Fathers are turned to their Children, and the hearts of the Children are turned to their Fathers; and the Parents rejoiced, as well they might, "believing in the Lord with all their house!"

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\* Mark v. 1—20, and vii. 31—37; Matt. xv. 29—31.

The answer of Paul to one of these Parents is particularly worthy of notice. The jailor, awakened and convinced of his danger and his guilt, had asked with great earnestness of spirit: "What shall I do to be saved?" when the apostle as earnestly replied: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"—*and thy house!* Neither Paul nor Silas could intend to intimate that *his* faith could save *them*; or, let his faith be as strong as it might, that *it* could carry all or any under his roof to heaven along with him. They must, however, have meant something; nay, something to *him*, next in importance to his own salvation, and even more than this. Taking advantage of the Parental heart, now broken down and tender, through conviction and guilt, they suggested at once that all under his roof stood in equal *danger* with himself, and in equal *need* of salvation—that all required to be saved in the *same way*—that, if he attached any importance to his present awakened state of mind, he should feel correspondingly for every branch of his family, who had suffered greatly under his past example, and for whose souls he always had been, but was now much more, responsible: nay, in these few expressive words, uttered at such a time, and in such a connection, the high vantage ground on which the Christian Parent stands is pointed out. If Christianity laid deep hold of *him*, and if means were used by him in faith, like the consecrated oil poured on the head of Aaron, which went down to the skirts of his garment, so in perfect consonance with the personal confidence in Jesus now demanded of himself, and the rich grace to be thus bestowed, this grace through him, as an instrument, might descend to all at home. Such an opportunity, however, after such an intimation, was not to be lost by the jailor. To every word of their reply he had paid marked attention, and his faith, in these few concluding words, appears very conspic-

uous from his conduct. Not a moment was lost ; he gave Paul and Silas an immediate opportunity ; “ and they spake unto him the word of the Lord,” and not to him only, but “ to *all* that were in his house ;” the wonderful effect we have already remarked—“ *He* believed, with *all his house!*”

Let it not, therefore, be imagined that it was upon Jewish families only that such rich mercy descended, or that this grace was merely in consonance with some peculiarity in the Old Testament dispensation. The cases already adduced refute this idea, and others might be mentioned. Look at the first streak of day, which gilded the horizon of the Gentile world. Upon opening the door of faith to us, the Gentiles, it is remarkable that we are at once ushered into the bosom of a most delightful *family*, and that a whole chapter of the Acts is employed in describing the scene. “ Cornelius was a devout man, and one that feared God, with *all his house*, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.”

In the days of Cornelius, the obstacle which seemed insuperable, consisted in a deep Jewish prejudice, affecting even the apostles, against the extension of Christianity and all its blessings to the heathen : in modern times the obstacle to its extension, which also seemed insuperable, consisted in a prejudice, as deep, on the part of the heathen themselves ; yet in this case also, the Almighty condescended to enter by the door of a single Family, or household. As he did by Cornelius at Cesarea in Palestine, so he has done, in our day, when breaking the chain of the cast in India. Yes, a departed friend, and old correspondent, so deservedly dear to me, who, before his death visited this country from India, Mr. Ward of Serampore, may be remembered by some of my readers, as having furnished this affecting modern instance, explanatory and confirmatory, too, of the method laid down by

the Messiah in his instructions to the twelve and the seventy. After his faith had long been tried, walking one evening on the banks of the Ganges with Dr. Marshman,—“Oh,” said he, “that God would give us but *one family*, into which we could go and sit down, and converse about the things of God.” At last He mercifully was pleased to do so. He gave them Kristno Pal, and all under his roof! At this the missionaries were greatly affected, and no wonder, after their faith and patience had been tried so long. “This household of Kristno,” said Brunson, then on the borders of the grave, “this household of Kristno gives us great pleasure.” “It is truly pleasant,” said Ward, “to be surrounded by Kristno and his Children,”—“a whole Family desiring to hear the gospel, and declaring in favor of it!” On the same evening this Man, his Wife, and her Sister, living with them, had declared their attachment to the Saviour; but, as it was from the beginning, the whole family became the objects of bitter persecution. By violence and stratagem the eldest of his three daughters was afterwards hurried away and carried off, when the other two were known to retire and pray for their Sister’s deliverance and their own salvation. One of these, the youngest, a little girl of only seven years old, when earnestly desiring to be baptized, said, “I am but a little child, but my soul is not little, and I have heard that, in Europe, Children of five years old have been saved.” In a word, Kristno, his wife, his wife’s sister, and ultimately three daughters, two sons-in-law (one of these the first converted Brahmin), with a widow residing under his roof, and a daughter of hers, were added to the Church at Serampore. So that, in reference to this mission, one might say: “Ye know the household of Kristno, that they are among the first fruits of India unto God, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints;” since of the three men in it, the Father built a

chapel at his own expense, near to his own dwelling, and, being ordained to the ministry, preached throughout Bengal for twenty years, and the son-in-law, Kristno Presaud, though he fell early in the cause, was one of the most able and amiable of Bengalee preachers.

Thus, Kristno, the first man who broke cast, was a *Parent*, and in a country where the heart is so ossified or rather steeled by idolatry, it remained for vital Christianity thus to open in it, even there, a fountain of tenderness. This very man, who, if he had remained an idolater, would have left his countrymen to perish, was many a day heard to entreat them with the greatest warmth: the man, who, if an idolater, might have thrown his offspring into the Ganges, was seen weeping over his own little grandchild, who died also in the faith, and went before him to glory. This was the same man, who said, when he was just about to expire: "I love my Saviour, though not as he loves me.—I find his promise good, 'I will not leave you comfortless.'—I have no fear in death.—My only wishes are, that *I and my Family* may be his; that all I have may be devoted to him; and that I may depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

Indeed, the history of this mission, is the more remarkable, as affording an evidence of God's special regard to the Family Constitution; since the god of this world, availing himself of the peculiar genius of the Hindoo superstition, had applied it to all the ties of nature, and linking together the branches of a household by the chain of the cast, he had then retired to the centre or bosom of every family circle, and there he had thrown up his strongest entrenchment. Yet, taking as a specimen the very first one hundred and fifty individuals who renounced cast and professed Christianity, we find not fewer than sixty-four individuals, at least, who came out of only twenty-five families, and, except in two or three instances,

both *Father and Mother* were amongst the number. Nay, out of only six families there were twenty-six individuals, Parents and Children, old and young. The most remarkable of these, certainly, was that of this fine character, Kristno Pal—a household, including himself, of not less than ten souls! A particular list of the hundreds who have been since converted, is not upon record, but the same gracious regard to the Family Constitution still is manifest. “I cannot conclude,” says one of the missionaries, in 1824, “without telling you, that this morning I have seen a whole family of natives, consisting of Grandfather, Father, Mother, and three Sons, all evidently seeking the way of salvation. They were first aroused to a sense of their condition by a tract left at the house of a neighbor, which he threw indignantly into the road, and one of the boys, about fifteen years of age, carried it home. They read it—came for more—I gave them the four gospels—and I do hope that time will show it has not been in vain.”

Thus, certainly, to a remarkable extent has the Almighty delighted to pour honor upon a constitution of his own creation, and his grace, in every age, where Parents are worth the name, will, I am persuaded, be found to run in such a channel. Yes; upon households as such, primitive Christianity beamed with peculiar benignity; but was there not a cause? Yes, had we stronger faith, it might, and without doubt, the day is coming when it will, do so again!

The interesting, the delightful accounts, however, of whole households being converted in a single day or hour, which are left upon record in Scripture, to excite our desire after similar results, are to be accounted for only on the supposition of an extensive and powerful awakening of the public mind; and they stand there in peculiar harmony, or “fine keeping,” with the authentic, because

inspired, narrative of hundreds, nay, thousands, being converted under a single address. The same result, however, let it be remembered, as to *families* in succeeding ages, has been found to hold good, proportionally to the extent or the intensity of the awakening. Of such results, even in our own day, America, at least, is able to furnish striking instances, proof of which I have now before me, in the periodical accounts from that country.

After such a detail as this, imperfect though it be, there can remain no doubt of the prophecy of Malachi having been literally accomplished. But, with the Sacred narrative in our hand, it would be strange were we to confine it to even instances like these; or suppose that single Families, here and there, though converted at once to Christianity, were all that the Prophet expressed, or the Spirit of God by him intended. No; the apostolic address took the widest range, and it met with correspondent effects, but still the same *principle* they always kept in view. Thus, to the three thousand Jews in the city of Jerusalem, converted in one day, on the same spot, under a single address, and relieved at the same instant by one and the same reply; when they cried out in an agony of distraction, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" we hear the conscience and the parental heart at once addressed by Peter,—“Repent, and be baptized, every *one* of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; for the promise (of the Holy Spirit, v. 17 and 33.) is to you, *and to your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” The promise to which Peter here refers was, of course, that which he had just quoted; where the manner in which “they and their Children” had been referred to by Joel, was peculiarly striking. Their sons—their daughters—their old men—their young men—their servants and hand-maidens, many

of whom were even in a state of vassalage, were all to partake of the Spirit; and, as a proof, not only were to believe and be saved, but individuals of every class mentioned were to prophesy or work miracles! So this Spirit had descended first on the Parents of John the Baptist, and the Messiah, and afterwards upon them; on the Parents of most of the apostles, if not all, as well as on them; and so now on the Parents, the Sons, the Daughters, the servants, in the city of Jerusalem; and ultimately, through them, on the Gentiles. This order should never be overlooked; and more especially on account of the interesting terms with which Peter concludes his address: —“ Even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” From these words it would seem that the *entire* fulfilment of that prophecy is not to be confined by time or space. Excepting, of course, the miraculous gifts, the proof *at that period*, of the Holy Spirit being received; as a minister of Christ, I am to use such language at this day, because all that was intended by Infinite Wisdom is not yet fulfilled; no, nor never will be, until God hath done with *calling*.

In conformity with these ideas, in the still more glorious effusion of the Spirit for which the Church is waiting, so far as the Jews are concerned, the terms employed are, to say the least, of the same character with those to which reference has been so often made. When the Spirit of grace and supplication is once poured out upon them, Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, looking to the cross at last, like as a Father on the dying frame of his *first-born*, or his *only Child*, all shall be drowned in grief. “ The land shall mourn, every *family* apart—all the families that remain; every family apart, and their wives apart.” In proportion as penitence is deep and pungent, it seeks retirement; but here it has gone to such extent as to sever for a time the strongest, tenderest, and most



confidential bond of nature. "Every family apart, and their *Wives* apart!"

If the reader will now turn to the twelfth chapter of Zechariah, he will see what is immediately to follow this great mourning. The fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, to the eyes of these Parents is now opened indeed. Satisfied now that there is no other Messiah than Jesus of Nazareth, they become most jealous for the honor of his name and worship: the ancient and prevalent plague of the Church—idolatry, is extinct; the very names of Jupiter and Baal, of the Pope and Mohammed, are repeated or remembered no more; and even anti-christian abominations have passed away (v. 2.) Satisfied, too, that the Volume of Inspiration is *completed*, as we now have it; that no more messages from Heaven are to be expected, nor any more necessary; nay, that the smallest addition is profanity of the highest order: "it shall come to pass, that when any shall *yet* prophesy, then his Father and his Mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live, for thou speakest lies to us in the name of the Lord: and his Father and Mother that begat him shall thrust him through, when he prophesieth." This deep penitence, then, ending, as it will do, in a piety and in a holy jealousy for God; such as perhaps the Christian Church has never yet witnessed; when the guardians of this distinguished piety and penitence are introduced to us, we see these are spoken of as Parents, alluding, it is true, to the power of the Parent then existing under the Mosaic economy.

Thus when the Spirit of God would describe to us the depth of penitence and the height of Christian zeal, or denote the prompt and vigorous measures, even the glory of the latter day, it seems as if more energetic terms could not be found, than those which are drawn from the

Domestic Constitution, and its powerful natural attachments.\*

What then is the amount of all this survey? After so much evidence has been adduced from Scripture, can nothing be founded upon it? Are we, in no respect, to be influenced or guided by it, when endeavoring to restore the human Family to its healthful and vigorous condition? Does not all this show, whatever some persons may say, that our first and strongest hope should rest on the Parents of a Family, and that to them Christianity directs her counsels and warnings, *immediately and directly*? Far gone they may be on the road to ruin, but for their ear and their conscience, we are furnished in Scripture with many serious, and tender, and awful arguments. Surely these, if used by us in faith, with constancy and patient perseverance, are able to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God? If, however, as Parents, and because they may be confirmed in evil habits, we regard them with a hopeless eye; or if aiming too low, we aim merely at amelioration

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\* What a striking contrast is there between these two effusions of the Spirit, so far as the *Jews* are concerned, between the prophecy of Joel and that of Zechariah? In the former case, Parents and Children, Sons and Daughters, and Servants, were endowed, and *prophesied*; but *now* Revelation is complete, and *so* complete, that the Parents, as guardians, are thus represented. Is not this one proof, at least, that miraculous and prophetic gifts are not to be revived or employed in the last grand triumph of Christianity? No; the Bible, as it is, is so full and so perfect, that, as far as its instrumentality is concerned, it will introduce the Millennium. Over Judaism and the Scriptures containing it, the Jews have watched for ages. To them were *committed* the Oracles of God; and during their sad and long apostacy, they have never ceased to discover even a superstitious veneration for the Scriptures of the Old Testament; but, *then*, of both Old and New they will be the enlightened guardians; and then, too, it seems, as jealous of any *addition*, as they are now anxiously and vainly waiting for one! even that which we possess.

and the reformation of manners, and not at their conversion, what wonder if we give them up in despair?

On the other hand, for such a mode of procedure as that which has been recommended, to say nothing more of the remarkable success which has attended it, there is one reason deeply founded in the constitution of every nation. By the law of nature and of God, by far the largest proportion, in every land, are enjoined to honor the rest; the whole Children, the whole Parents. Now, as Christianity in its addresses pays regard to this arrangement, in every attempt to restore the families of a country, let us also regard it. On Parents, as such, the eye of our omniscient and final Judge is now manifestly resting: let our eye follow in the same direction. On them, and not on the legislator, or the benevolent public, does he lay the *highest* responsibility, and on them alone: let us also go and do likewise. Let nothing be done by us to weaken the force or tone of their obligations, nothing to render them easy and satisfied under neglect. On the contrary, let every Christian, so far as his influence can extend, contribute his mite, to bind this sense of obligation on the shoulders of those, upon whom God, in his wisdom and mercy to mankind, hath imposed it.

The writer, however, will be greatly misapprehended indeed, if he is understood to be enforcing any thing more than the *order* of procedure; though the order, in the first instance, and in all cases, not only as it respects the terms of Scripture, and the order of those terms, but the necessity for *our faith* thus falling in with the means employed in primitive times so successfully: for although it is probable they were Parents who brought their Children, for whose encouragement and consolation our Lord first uttered these gracious words—"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" still, should Parents remain

obstinate, after the means thus used by us in faith; firmly retaining our determination not to be diverted from proceeding in the same manner *elsewhere*; even as to them we are not without resource. Let us aim at the Children, first through those who have the strongest claims, and ought to feel the warmest interest in them, their Parents; and though for a season they remain unmoved, let us not despair: reach them we may still, and that through the Children, who, at all events, should not be neglected. Such exceptions to a general rule there will ever be, in a world where sin has marred and disordered all things; but these must not, by any means, in any nation, beguile us from treading in the footsteps of the harbinger of Jesus, nay, of Jesus himself, and his apostles, when turning “the heart of the Fathers unto their Children, and the heart of Children to their Fathers.”

Without any miraculous interference, without any earthquake or voice from heaven, means we do possess of producing, under God, the same awakened state of mind, which that hardened Parent, the Philippian jailor, evinced, when he cried out—“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And there is still One above, who will sanction our reply, —“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house.*”

## SECTION FIFTH.

### FAMILY GOVERNMENT.

The positive obligation of Parents, as such, to use the means which God, in his wisdom, hath ordained, for attaining his end or design in the Domestic Constitution.—Family Government illustrated under three heads, viz. Order—Subordination—and Harmony.

THE means appointed by infinite Wisdom to reach the end of the Family Constitution now demand our notice : and these may be comprehended under three heads, viz. Family Government, Family Religion, and Family Education, properly so called. To these may be added, Family Maxims, or General Principles, which, if these means are understood and adopted, will then be easy of comprehension, and not difficult to apply.

Before entering on either of these, however, it ought to be distinctly understood, that the moral, and therefore positive, obligation to use these means, does in no respect whatever *depend* either on the inclination or the ability of the Parents. So far from this being the fact, the existence of disinclination or moral inability will merely prove the Parents to be guilty, while the obligation, in all cases, remains, and respects every Parent as a Parent—every Man as a Man, and not as a Christian only.

It is, indeed, a weak and miserable subterfuge to which some resort, when they tell us, with sinful simplicity, that

they *cannot* attend to these subjects, because they themselves are not Christians; while yet they will not move the short and more important previous question: *Why not?* And it is still more to be regretted, that some persons, professing Christianity, who ought rather to blush for their ignorance and want of principle, have given their guilty sanction to such folly, by replying merely: "Well, to be sure, this is very true, and, until you are a converted individual, you cannot attend to these subjects in a manner acceptable to God."

Now, instead of thus betraying, at once, the rights of God, and the dearest interests of humanity, let me entreat the reader, if it is necessary, to look directly and alone to this very disinclination and professed inability. These you will find are not only consistent with obligation: but this obligation regards them with the eye of authority and command. This inability and disinclination are, in themselves, to your conscience, at this moment, the proof of personal guilt, and the very ground of condemnation. In other words, these are, my friend, by no means your misfortunes only, but your crimes, and therefore it becomes a shame for any Parent to indulge, much more to plead, such dispositions.

The organization of your family, and the end proposed, with the chain of connection between these two, or, what have been called the means in order to that end, are all to be resolved into the prerogative or peculiar privilege of Almighty God. He who *creates* and thus establishes the constitution, has also, in the depth of his wisdom and goodness, *equally* established the means to his own end or design. Here, therefore, you stand, in the same situation with every Parent, as the head of his family. Thus, life and death, or good and evil, are, by God, set before you, as well as every other Parent; and from you and your partner, as from a fountain, will the waters proceed,

sweet or bitter. Yes, the frame of the human family was created for action, and strikingly exhibits the means to an end. The moral obligations of Parents, therefore, who occupy the most important place in a family, like all other moral obligations, consist in an *indispensable* connection between the means and the end ; so that, if they would gain the unspeakable blessings of the end, they are indispensably bound, that is, they are *obliged*, to use the means. On the contrary, if they *will not*, all the evils which result must follow by a necessity of consequence, and all these, too, in consequence of their negligence and impiety.

You may, indeed, not like the means, and if you require any argument, you *do not*. Now, upon this aversion itself I fix, and tell you that *it* constitutes the ground of condemnation. So conscience will also tell you every morning you rise, and she will add, too, that moral ability is not necessary to *constitute* moral obligation. At such a moment look round upon your infant charge, and remember that these young immortals are growing up under the moral government of God their Creator : while you are free indeed, as far as any creature can be ; that is, you are free to *obey* ; for to admit indifference here would be to legalize rebellion.

In these circumstances, therefore, to every Parent who objects or even hesitates, I have only three questions for conscience to answer, and the party is speechless ; and, if he is so from conviction, he will then not unnecessarily delay one hour, in considering the importance and the necessity of *personal* religion.

*First*, Have you a natural capacity ; or have you a conscience, and are you possessed of reason ? *Second*, Have you a Bible at home, as the means of information ? *Third*, Is no one *compelling* you to act as you have done hitherto ?

These simple interrogations you will not hesitate to answer ; the first, in the affirmative ; the last, in the negative ; and the second, just as the case may be. Then, my reader, I want, I need, no more. You are in a situation *suitable* enough for even me to blame you, and assuredly for God to hold you responsible, as at this moment he does. Nay, I object not even to narrow this ground for you still farther. Answer me only the first question ? Then this *alone* constitutes you a subject of God's moral government to the utmost extent. You are now *bound* to procure the means of *information*, if you have them not : you are now *bound* to resist all *interference*. But, in this country especially, no one dare, no one does interfere, from the king downward. You are now therefore stripped of every plea, and left with these, and many such words, in your ear—"A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master. If, then, I be a Father, where is mine honor ? and if I be a Master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts ?"

Beware, therefore, reader, beware now especially, of any subterfuge. Tell me not even that divine influence is requisite to your choice of these means : because, though it be, I can and do immediately reply, that this is no *interference* with your act of choice itself ; nor has it, as you know, or may know, any conscious influence in breaking the connection between your present motive and choice, between your present disinclination and your incumbent duty. No, no, the question is not what moves or causes obedience ; but what is the *rule* of it ?

Perhaps the reader, now aware of the meaning of what has been advanced, is disposed to say—"But stop one moment. If you are right, I am involved indeed in a serious situation ; for it seems, my very *will itself*, rather than any mean, is the precise and proper object of precept and command." I answer precisely so ; now, at last, we



are right. The heart, the whole heart, is demanded first by God, and to be, by him, directed for his purposes, and in entire subordination to his revealed will, whatever that will may prove. And, oh, my friend, if this is the height, it is also the measure, of your being. By God's unaltered, nay, unalterable law, your heart is so demanded: now, the design of law is to *bind to one side*, and the design of authoritative command is to turn the will one way.

Obligation therefore admitted, you may now cast your eye upon these means: since the prodigious extent and strength of your obligation is to be seen in them, and in your natural or relative connection with them. Indeed, with reference to them, *on account of which* the family has been gathered, over which you preside, the obligation on you is so strong, that I might ask you, if you can, to point out a stronger. You are bound in conscience and in duty, in law and in honesty, in gratitude and in kindness: you are bound by the nature of the Family Constitution, and by the design of its constitution: bound by regard to your own character as a Parent, by regard to the highest interests of your offspring, as well as the peace and well-being of posterity: bound, in short, by the strongest ties of our nature, as well as the revealed will of God. How strong must that obligation be, the violation of which can and will secure the united testimony of so many witnesses against you: and, ah! how could you ever meet them, and meet them all in union, another day? Suffer them but to speak now, and you will not be able to endure even the prospect.

After all, this is by no means the only line of argument which might be adopted. Did you never think of the meaning of the English word Paternity, or Fathership? This relation as such necessarily involves much. Consider it only for a moment in two points of view, as connected with God and with your family. In the first

connection, does it not involve trust? When God places any man, before solitary, or only a son, at the head of a family, does he not say by such a step,—“I constitute you as the trustee, the guide, the guardian of this part of mankind? All under the roof are your charge, and to you intrusted.” Now, for what end? To be ruled, *or not?* to be instructed, *or not?* to be by your example and your precepts led to heaven, *or not?* The negative, in such cases, is not merely monstrous; it is profane. If the first connection involves duty to be discharged for God, the second involves love of and care over those given to you by him. But of the body only, or of the body without any reference to the great inhabitant within? The negative here is not less objectionable; it is cruelty and hatred. Only act, therefore, under the influence of this trust, and this incumbent love and care: then might one say to you, —“Neglect Family Government, or even Family Devotion, if you can.”

The obligation to Family Government being, therefore, granted, all that is necessary in illustration of the subject may be comprehended under the three following heads, viz. Family Order, Subordination, and Harmony.

*Order.*—Every person is pleased with this exhibition of a Family, though many are by no means equally in love with its cause; just as many are pleased with the humble man, who do not love humility. But still order is but another name for an effect whose cause is government; and as it is in the world of nature where effects are viewed with delight, when their proximate cause is kept concealed by Infinite Wisdom, so the order of a Family rises in our admiration just in proportion as its cause is withdrawn from public view, or the notice of a stranger. On the other hand, nothing is more irksome to the visitors in a family, than to see the cause and its effect jumble with

each other, when authority and disorder are contending for the superiority. The reason of this is obvious. It is a transgression on the part of the *Parents* in our presence, and involuntarily, as it were, we think of them, not the Children. The government is their affair alone, not ours; the effect is ours, in part, and, on going into a family, is meant at once for our comfort, our encouragement, and our instruction. Never let Parents for one moment suppose, that any friend can be gratified with their chiding, or pointing, or bustling in his presence. This is not the way to proceed even behind the curtain, much less here; but whatever was necessary for order should have been transacted elsewhere by themselves alone,—an evidence sufficient that order is at once an effect and a proof of established government. If, therefore, we wish to follow nature, or, to speak with more correctness, its Author, the cause must be concealed.

To the Parents, therefore, in the first instance, are we again directed, since the *terms on which they live with each other* form the first and highest cause of family order, subordination and harmony.

Of confusion, in no one instance, is God the Author; but of order and of peace He is assuredly the cause in every family properly conducted, as well as in all churches of the saints. The precise and appropriate sphere of every relation, from the head downwards, he has described in his word, with a minute accuracy, which demonstrates the importance, in his eye, of domestic duties, and of each individual knowing his own place, as well as how to act in it. Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, Master and Servant, are again and again singled out; and the parties who will only take his word, and *study* it, as their guide, need, in truth, no other Family-book.

It is here not unworthy of remark, that the progress of Divine Revelation is peculiarly distinguished by its throw-

ing an increasing light on all subjects of importance and unchanging obligation,—the nature of sin—the character and government—the law and the gospel of God—as well as the constitution of every human family. To those who have read the preceding pages, I may presume, it will be no objection to these last, and clearest or most explicit injunctions of the sacred volume, that both Parents are *supposed* to be Christians; since the original intention of God in the Domestic Constitution is then only most clearly seen; and since it has been proved to be alike the duty and the interest of all to be of the Christian faith. So much indeed depends on this supposition, that, in Scripture, we find a style of exhortation, built on the nature of the connection thus subsisting between them. One passage, in particular, is so distinguished for its peculiar emphasis and beauty, that, although it has been already referred to, the reader cannot object to its being quoted entire:

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord: for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it, with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined to his

wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery ; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife, even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

Thus, lest there should be any mistake or misunderstanding, it is expressly revealed, that in the management of the common Family, the husband stands in a situation analogous to that in which even Christ stands to the Church. Nothing being so essential to mutual harmony, and harmonious operation, as an explanation of the grounds of authority and the true character and connection of such an intimate relation as this, in addressing the Wife, she is informed, not by the Husband, but by God himself, that, as Christ is her Governor in the Church, so is her Husband in the Family. His authority over her there, however, like that of the Saviour's over the Church, is founded in the love which he bears to her, the protection he affords, and the provision which he makes for her, of all the necessaries, and, if possible, the conveniences of life. What a serious situation, then, and how full of responsibility, is that of every husband ! The obedience enjoined by God is, it seems, not for the Husband's gratification merely, but for a higher end ; and, in return for the honor which is put upon him, he is bound to the fulfilment of corresponding duties. Should he presume to trifle with this love—this protection—this provision,—then does he vacate the obligation on which the submission of his partner in life is founded. True, she may ; and if, under the influence of Christian principle, she will act as consistently as she can ; but *he* has no right whatever to complain, nor can a single intimation as to her duty escape with grace from *his* lips. The connection is of the highest reciprocal character, involving a mutual endeavor to make each other happy : and the Husband, who

is conscious of failing in duty, should be led back to his own delinquency, by every failure on the part of his Wife. In one word, if the Wife is to be subject to her Husband *as* unto the Lord, then is he to love his Wife even *as* Christ loved the Church.

Parents, it is true, have their infirmities, and do not always see eye to eye; but if each is impressed, as each ought to be, with the importance of every misunderstanding being explained and settled, *not* in the presence of their Family, but when alone, they will mutually waive any expression of dissent till the proper season. Should this precaution be disregarded, Children will not only range under opposite sides, but they are in imminent danger of failing in duty and respect to that Parent from whom they differ. The tranquillity of both Parents, as well as the peace of all under that roof, are then and thus at an end.

On the other hand, imperfect though Parents be, and though both may and will fall short, occasionally, still success, and safety, and domestic order, depend on both aiming after the right pattern. Should their mutual love be grounded on esteem, there is a secret and instituted virtue in their example, which will descend on a constitution of things divinely adapted and appointed to receive it. In every union of which God approves (and he approves of whatever he has appointed and enjoined), he intends not only the present enjoyment of two or three—he has a higher end in view; and what can that end be, in this case, if it is not to promote in all under our roof, the same mutual endeavor to make each other happy?

The foundation of order being thus laid, as securely as the present state of human nature will admit, in the inviolable and strong attachment, as well as the assiduous endeavors of both Parents; both being bound, and to be

themselves governed by law; we are prepared to illustrate the next branch of Family Government.

*Subordination*, or the establishment of authority.—The peculiarity of the Domestic Constitution is to be seen in a most beautiful and interesting light, by observing the manner in which subordination is established. Our Creator appears here, as on many other occasions, to know our frame, and to remember that we are but dust, by making our commencement as easy as it is *possible*.

In his own moral government, where conscience is in operation, and reason has dawned, a society of intelligent beings, to which he is united, ruling as Head; knowing that his authority can neither be established nor maintained sufficiently, without exhibiting and enforcing methods, and rules, and ends; therefore has he surrounded us by his works, and put into our hand his own divine revelation. But a Parent he stations to watch over the seedlings or buds only of this moral government. There, in their most important, because their earliest years, neither conscience nor reason are yet in operation; and for some time, at least, our government of our Children stands in the same relation to *them* which the Almighty's general government of *providential* disposal does to *us*. Men, indeed, who are but Children of larger growth, often complain of Providence, and strangely desire some explanation or revelation of the scheme; forgetting that such revelation, if *understood*, might deprive them of reason, or might darken and embitter all their days. But the truth seems to be, that though it were given, we should never be able to take it in. Far too vast for our present reach, it would ever be above our sphere of judgment. Such revelation, however, is not only mercifully withheld: it is not necessary, since, for every step of our mysterious journey to the skies, it is

quite sufficient for us to know, that "He is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind."

Just so it is with Children. It is enough for them if, with all my imperfections, I, as a Parent, am regulated by *wisdom* and *kindness*. The subordination which I require I need not explain: they could not understand it though I did. Now, in this I read the considerate kindness of God. I am placed in the closest connection with a few of the members of his moral government; nay, I am called to train a few of the future Sons and Daughters of God; and yet to them I owe, *at first*, no explanation of my conduct: I need not give it; I merely require to act. This is what I meant by the commencement being rendered as *easy* as it is possible. This is at once a peculiarity in this singular Constitution, and a high token of Divine favor, on the morning of all its kind and important intentions.

In this arrangement of Providence, however, it is necessary to fix the eye on its design. There is *design* here. You may admire in it the beautiful arrangement of Heaven, which has so adapted the weakness of one generation to the strength of that which precedes it, and the power which the expressions of that weakness have over parental sympathy; but is this all? Besides nourishing and cherishing these Children, is it not as evidently designed that you should *regulate and guide* them, as well as that they should *obey* you? Has not Jehovah, in the depth of his condescension, sometimes illustrated the principles of his own government by allusions to that of a Family, and thus at the same time explained it? "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt." "I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on



their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." Or as Tyndal has it: "I learned Ephraim to go and bare them in my arms. I led in the cords of friendship and bands of love. I was even he that laid the yoke upon their necks: I gave them my fodder myself, that they should not go again into Egypt." The allusions here, it is true, refer not only to man; they go down so low as even the animal creation, from whence indeed a great deal of instruction may be acquired: but

A longer care man's helpless kind demands;  
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:  
Reflection, Scripture, still the ties improve,  
At once extend the interest and the love;  
And still new seeds, new helps, new habits rise,  
That graft your duty upon charities.

Surely, then, it is manifest, that all the implanted tenderness of Parental love is subordinate to a higher end—the ruling and directing of those under your care.

Thus, then, you have at once to proceed to action. You act as supreme: and if you only look up for wisdom, (and who ever did so in vain?) and act with wisdom, you will not only, at this, the "appointed season," establish your authority, but in the very dawn of reason you may, by mere action, have instructed your children into some of the most important principles, which animate the Christian even in *mature* life. Great sagacity, indeed, is required here, but still the thing is, in some instances, possible. "Children," says Mr. Cecil, "are very early capable of impression. I imprinted on my daughter the idea of faith in God, at a very early age. She was playing one day with a few beads, which seemed to delight her wonderfully. Her whole soul was absorbed in her beads. I said—'My dear, you have some pretty beads there.' 'Yes, papa.' 'And you seem to be vastly pleased with them.' 'Yes, papa.' 'Well now, throw 'em behind the

fire.' The tears started into her eyes. She looked earnestly at me, as though she ought to have a reason for such a cruel sacrifice. 'Well, my dear, do as you please: but you know I never told you to do any thing which I did not think would be good for you.' She looked at me a few moments longer, and then, summoning up all her fortitude, her breast heaving with the effort, she dashed them into the fire. 'Well,' said I, 'there let them lie: you shall hear more about them another time; but say no more about them now.' Some days after, I bought her a box full of larger beads, and toys of the same kind. When I returned home, I opened the treasure, and set it before her: she burst into tears of ecstasy. 'Those, my child,' said I, 'are yours, because you believed me when I told you it would be better for you to throw those two or three paltry beads behind the fire. Now, that has brought you this treasure. But now, my dear, remember as long as you live, what FAITH is. I did all this to teach you the meaning of faith. You threw your beads away when I bid you, because you had faith in me, that I never advised you but for your good. Put the same confidence in God. Believe every thing that he says in his word. Whether you fully understand it or not, have faith in Him that he *means* your good.'

I do not know but that some slight objection may be made to this illustration, and I do not mention it, by any means, with a view to put Parents on trying such experiments. They are perhaps the most ticklish of any in which a man can engage, and, by the most skilful, must be tried but very rarely indeed; and even then, not only are circumstances to be considered, but, as I said before, the greatest sagacity is needful. Still, when authority is established, and the dear Children feel that they are loved most tenderly, were Parents wise and watchful, I am persuaded that other principles might be still more happily, and perhaps more correctly illustrated.

This, however, after all, though a valuable, is only a contingent or an accidental advantage : but the truth is, that all the benefits which, as a Parent, you are happily appointed to convey to your family, rest on established authority as their sole and appropriate foundation.

As all lasting affection must be grafted on esteem and respect : as it is at once your interest and your duty to form *confidential* habits in all around you : as you desire to interfere in the way of authority but seldom, but that when you do so, you should be obeyed : for these, and other blessings, you have at least laid the proper foundation. Thus, too, though the grounds of your authority need not be explained, and could not be comprehended though they were, your charge will enjoy the first and highest benefits of their existence, from a source, as yet, above their comprehension !

This state of things, however, is not to continue long. Their eyes and ears were given them for constant use, and very soon they will observe, and even in their own little minds make observation, whether you *yourself are governed by law*, and whether you, in all your conduct, seem also to be under the authority of one above. And, O, at this interesting stage of infancy, I know not of a more advantageous and powerful school for instruction, than when the eye and ear of our children are saluted, daily, by the reverential eye of their Parents, and the devotional tones of their Parent's voice. If you, my readers, as Parents, are indeed a living epistle, your Children, without being requested, will read this daily, and with marked observation.

Children, however, are daily advancing, and therefore provision must be made for this. Authority, though fully established, must also be maintained : but this cannot be done without laws, and there is no law, where there are no rewards and punishments. Without these, what is

called law, is merely solemn advice. Already, indeed, the Children are under law, because they are under authority, but very soon your instructions will, among other subjects, unfold, by slow but certain degrees, the principles on which you have acted from the beginning, and on which you intend still to proceed. The government of your family, though so singularly established, was begun in such wisdom, and is to be conducted on principles of such fairness and sterling equity, that the very conscience, in its first efforts, you will now find coming in to your assistance; and, corrupt though human nature be, coming to your assistance in a state the most interesting and precious to a Parent's heart—

In early days the conscience has in most  
A quickness, which in later life is lost :  
Preserved from guilt by salutary fears,  
Or guilty, soon relenting into tears.

Punishments and rewards, which suppose law, as it supposes them, call for no passing consideration: more especially since, both in every human government and in the family, this has been considered by some, as nearly the most difficult department. I question, however, whether the great majority of mistakes here, at least in domestic life, may not be traced to one of only two sources: either our not understanding the *principle* on which both should be conducted, or our violating this principle, though admitted. To assist us in ascertaining this principle, it may be remarked, that there is nothing of which, in the first years of infancy, a child is more susceptible, than the parental *smile* or *frown*. If this fine adaptation of Parent to Child is trifled with by the Parent; if it is regulated by no principle; or if it is disregarded, and its powerful influence is gradually wearing away, then the Parent is daily and deeply in fault. This influence once gone! by

the righteous retribution of Heaven, the Child is now appointed to inflict punishment. To try his Parent's patience—to exhaust his wits—and in some cases to break his very spirit, or bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave! At any one of these unhappy stages in the experience of an erring Parent, does the reader inquire, What remains to be done? I know of no other reply, than that he is to begin at the *beginning*, on the same principle with the lad, which he ought to have done with him when an infant. I have said only, on the same principle: but now the application of it requires much more wisdom and sagacity than before; much more than the infant required, and, alas! perhaps *now* much more than the Parent happens to possess! Such, however, is the order and law of nature. “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”

To return, however, to the infant, and to the principle on which both punishment and reward should proceed; if I so manage, that the severest punishment which *can* be felt in my family is the loss of my *favor*, and the richest reward which *can* be felt, is the enjoyment and expression of it, I shall not greatly err. To this, therefore, all my wisdom and pains-taking, all my other arrangements should tend. Under this, the highest, there must still, however, be subordinate punishments and rewards: and if each of these come in, as the consequence of obedience and duty fulfilled, and the former are never felt, but in consequence of the violation of authority, here also I shall not greatly err. The excess of punishment or reward, and the unequal application of either, have been already illustrated under a former Section. To what is there stated I would now only add, that there are two instruments to be employed in all cases for maintaining authority: the one of *constant*, the other only of *occasional* application, and that the occasional use of the one de-

pendents materially on the constancy of the other. If the first is studied as it ought to be, and then applied with consistent constancy, a tenderness and dexterity in applying the second will be the consequence, which, without observing this order, no rules whatever can supply. The first instrument is the *reins*, the second is the *rod or reward*. The righteous man is said to regard the life even of his beast; but this very regard will prompt him to study the science of the reins supremely.

I recollect of hearing of two coaches which used to drive into Newmarket from London, by a certain hour, at a time of strong competition. The coach which generally came in first had, I think, four greys, and, upon their arrival, the people used to remark, that there was scarcely a wet hair on one of them. In the other, though last, the horses were jaded and even heated to excess, and had the appearance of having made great efforts. The reader, perhaps at once, understands the cause of this difference. The first man did it all, of course, by the reins: the second, unsteady in himself, or unskilful in the reins, had induced bad habits, and then employed the whip, but he could never cope with the other. So it will ever hold in all guidance, in all government. If obedience to the reins is found to be most pleasant in itself, and even the road to enjoyment, then obedience will grow into a habit, and become in fact the choice of the party. “*Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*”

*Domestic Harmony.*—I am well aware, that some Parents frequently dwell upon the difficulty of maintaining either order or subordination in their household; but let them remember, at such a time, there is a reward awaiting them, if these are established, even in this life, and almost immediately: for it seems to be only in exact pro-

portion as these are studied and maintained, that the whole household can enjoy the great and unspeakable felicity of domestic harmony and peace. In this little community, should any misunderstanding or jarring ever take place, let not the eye of Parents pore over the evil itself only. They would do well to consider it but the effect of a cause, at least in many instances, and that cause one in which they themselves are almost as much involved as the parties at variance. Let them but consider the incident in this light, and it will often prove a memento to themselves, that there has been either some deficiency in point of order on their part, or some deficiency in that subordination, which they have not sufficiently established among those who are dependent upon them.

For what though no two individuals under this roof are of the same age—of the same talents—or even of precisely the same natural temper or disposition? Collisions, of course, there may and must occur; but this disparity, in itself considered, even when it proves the occasion of such collisions, may, under the influence of order and subordination, be employed as a mighty assistant to habitual peace and harmony. The Family Constitution is one of Nature's works, and therefore, under the domestic roof, in *proportion* as order and subordination are maintained, the same analogy will be found to hold good, which we admire in the delightful field of nature,

“ Where order in variety we see,  
And where, though all things differ, they agree.”

It is obvious, that the daily incidents, of the domestic circle are, comparatively, but of small account; and it is therefore the more to be regretted, that they should ever prove the seeds of such evil in future life, which, without doubt, they must, if not properly regarded, and brought

under the guidance of well-regulated government; but, on the other hand, should they be so, instead of being matter of regret, they furnish the very means of preparing the inmates for acting their part in the free and full society of future existence. Indeed, in a well-regulated family, these same tiny events can be not only disposed of to advantage, but occasionally referred to by such Parents, with their Children around them, in language which may be of lasting benefit to every ear. From their lips such language as the following, will not only prove salutary, but pleasing to the recollection of every Child; and more especially when their Parents are gone :

“ Since trifles make the sum of human things,  
 And half our misery from our foibles springs;  
 Since life's best joys consist in peace and ease,  
 And though but few may serve, yet all may please :  
 O! let the ungentle spirit learn from hence,  
 A small unkindness may give great offence.  
 To spread large bounties though we wish in vain,  
 Yet all may shun the guilt of giving pain :  
 To bless mankind with tides of flowing wealth,  
 With rank to grace them, or to crown with health,  
 Our little lot denies ; yet lib'ral still,  
 Heav'n gives its counterpoise to every ill ;  
 Nor let us murmur at our stinted powers,  
 When kindness, love, and concord, may be ours.  
 The gift of ministering to others' ease  
 To all her sons impartial she decrees ;  
 The gentle offices of patient love,  
 Beyond all flattery, and all price above ;  
 The mild forbearance at a brother's fault,  
 The angry word suppress'd, the taunting thought ;  
 Subduing and subdued, the petty strife,  
 Which clouds the color of domestic life ;  
 The sober comfort, all the peace which springs  
 From the large aggregate of little things ;  
 On these small cares of daughter, wife, or friend,  
 The almost sacred joys of *Home* depend :  
 There, Sensibility, thou best may'st reign,  
 HOME is thy true legitimate domain.”

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Many and great indeed are the advantages which must accrue to both Children and Servants where such Family Government is at once studied and maintained; nor must the Parents themselves now be forgotten, after duties, delightful in many respects, but arduous and difficult as these must ever be. What, then, shall be done for the Parents who excel in Family Government? Duty, it is true, always brings along with it its own reward, and, in the present case, a reward so rich, that it can with difficulty be expressed in language, and certainly can never be fully comprehended by mere description; while the future enjoyment of both Parents, in the present life, absolutely hinges upon their fulfilment of such duty. But still this is not all which is held out in Scripture to the parental eye: on Parents such as these, the Saviour of the world, even after he was enthroned in glory, condescended to look down, and then did He point them out to general notice, upon one of the most important occasions which ever does occur in his own kingdom here below. In his Church, intending there should always be found two classes of individuals bearing the highest responsibility; in both cases, it seems, he must glance at the subject of Family Government, or Domestic order, subordination and harmony: as much as to signify to every succeeding age, that they are Christians but of inferior character indeed, who have not paid a due regard to this duty; and that though other qualifications might seem, at once, to suggest a man to observation, this was a negative which was to destroy all other positives. Having once suggested, and even cherished the desire of such an office—"A bishop *then*," says the Almighty, "a bishop *then must* be—one that ruleth *well* his own house, having his children in subjection, with all gravity; for if a man know not *how* to rule his own house, *how* shall he take care of the Church of God?" The deacons, too, it seems, must

be men "ruling their Children and their own houses well;" not indifferently, but well.

Thus did the Redeemer of mankind, not only fix his eye on this subject, but by so doing, and at such a time, meant to fix ours. So invaluable and singular a prize or bounty is nowhere else held out, in the whole compass of the Book of God, to any who excel in any other way. Favors these, which are the highest ever bestowed on mortal man on this side the grave;—favors, too, by which he not only meant to fix the eye of his associated people, but of every member there, in every age, at every such solemn and interesting moment; and thus, in a way peculiar to himself, while providing for the government of his own House, bring up also, in a secondary manner, the government and guidance of the Family, to the highest possible pitch of perfection! Suggesting, at once, equally, to both pastors and their flock, that upon this one subject, in a vital degree, depended the moral health and energy, the peace and prosperity, of his whole kingdom!

After all this, however, it is fully granted, because it is true, that no man, whether in his individual, or domestic, or social capacity, even by faith in God, or obedience to Him as an effect of that faith, can ever be raised entirely above the curse pronounced at the beginning on the family of Adam; nor will any such man ever admit the vain expectation: but still he finds that, through the tender mercy and kindness of God, that curse may be greatly mitigated; and he is the only person who knows, for himself, and in his domestic circle, that wisdom's ways are "ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

In our search after Domestic felicity, therefore, come we must, at last, to the same conclusion which the wisest of men once did, in his inquiry after sublunary bliss in general:—"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments;" since this,

after all that can be said, involves the whole happiness of man: "for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Then will this filial fear and obedience be found to have involved the only happiness which can bear such scrutiny; the only enjoyment which will then be shown to have been legitimate, and the only species of enjoyment on which the Almighty Judge will pronounce the sentence of his final and everlasting approbation.

## SECTION SIXTH.

### FAMILY DEVOTION.

The obligations to Family Worship—The abuse to which it has been exposed—The best seasons for Family Devotion—The profitable performance of Domestic Worship.

ALTHOUGH all that is incumbent on the Father or Mother of a Family might be inferred from what has been already advanced, and is certainly implied in many passages, the religion or Christianity of a Family is so essentially connected with the principles on which Divine Worship is offered there, and the spirit in which it is conducted, that some special notice of this subject becomes necessary. The observations which follow, therefore, are intended to embrace the obligations to Family Worship—the abuse to which it has been exposed—the best seasons for Family Devotion—with the various exercises which are included in the profitable performance of Domestic Worship.

I. *The Obligations to Family Worship.*—The disposition of some men, professing Christianity, to ask peremptorily for a *particular precept* in all cases of incumbent moral duty, is one which every Christian would do well to examine; not only that he may never be troubled with it himself, but that he may be at no loss in answering such a man, if he is called to converse with him. The par-

ticular duty to which he refers, say, for example, Family Worship, is comparatively of small account. His question itself, is indicative not merely of great ignorance; it is symptomatic of the want of religious principle. When a man says, that he can *only* be bound to such a duty, a moral duty, by a positive and particular precept, I am satisfied that *he* could not perform it, in obedience to any precept whatever; nor could he, even now, though he were to try. The truth is, that this man has no disposition towards such worship, and he rather requires to be informed of the grounds of all such obligation.

If you have been accustomed to look a little deeper than the surface of human character, you will find that men of this description secretly cherish the idea, that they have found out the way of living happily enough without holiness; and should they also seem to have drank deeply into such principles, I should as soon expect to cure insanity by reasoning as to cure them. They know not, as yet, what Scripture has so emphatically called, "the plague of their own heart;" but while to this alone we can direct them, there are not wanting individuals who require to be fortified even against such poor sophistry.

The duty of Family Devotion, therefore, let it be remembered, though it had been minutely enjoined as to both substance and season, would not, after all, have been founded only on such injunctions. I want the reader thoroughly to understand the *character* of a Christian, the *constitution* of the Family; and out of this character and that constitution, he will find certain duties to arise *necessarily*; that is, they are essential to the continuance and well-being of himself as a Christian Parent, and of the constitution over which he is set. In this case there can be no question as to their obligation, and for a precept there is no necessity. The Almighty, in his word, has not

only said nothing in vain, but nothing except what is necessary. Now, as to Family Worship for a particular precept, I have no wish; no, not even for the sake of *others*, because I am persuaded that the Christian, in his sober senses, *will* naturally obey, and no other *can*.

To apply, however, this request for a precise precept to some other branches of Family duty, what would be thought of me, were I to demand an express precept to enforce my obligation to feed my children, and another to oblige me to clothe them? one to express my obligation to teach them the use of letters, and another to secure my training them to lawful or creditable professions or employments? "All this," very properly you might reply, "is absurd in the highest degree; your obligation rests on much higher ground; nay, doth not *nature* itself teach you in this, and much more than this?" Very true, I reply; and is *renewed nature*, then, not to teach me far more still? To what other nature are such words as these addressed: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Yes, God in his word has addressed us, not *as* men of perverted reason, but *as* accountable beings. If we out of generals collect not particulars, and infer not from plain *grounds* the necessary conclusions, wo is unto us: it will go ill with us in this world, and in that also which is to come. It becomes not the majesty of God to trifle with his creatures; and if, in his public edicts, his mind is expressed, it were unworthy of him to descend to what is already enough revealed. In his word I expect that a grandeur will be found worthy of the supreme Lord of all; and I adore Him, that, having put the heart right, he hath in many ways left room for all to ascertain whether it

really is so. If, therefore, nature itself is supposed in Scripture to teach me so much, assuredly the *renewed* nature is there also supposed to teach me much more.

These observations may enable the reader to account for the fact, that the world had gone on for many ages, and been favored too with no small portion of divine revelation, without prayer, in any form, having been once enjoined or instituted as a duty, whether in the closet, the family, or the church; a division, by the way, which, though proper enough for the sake of illustration, is but of comparatively modern date. No; from the beginning the piety of the heart led men to take up this subject in the only way which was natural, and proper, and safe; from the beginning such men had always prayed and worshipped, and that thousands of years before Paul had said to Timothy—"I will that men pray *everywhere*, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

The very first injunction in Scripture, therefore, respecting such a moral duty, was likely to occur not in the way of positive institution, as something which then only had begun to be incumbent, and then only to be begun, and much less something which was before unknown. Accordingly, it turns out, that the "first injunction respecting prayer, in the Volume of Inspiration, the terms of which regard it, as in any sense generally obligatory, does not occur until the world was at least three thousand years old, and the Jewish church about eight hundred.\* Perhaps the passage which might be styled the second, does not occur till at least two hundred years later.†"

At the same time, the manner, the seasons, the spirit, the constancy, the universality of prayer, as the attendant of piety, I find scattered over the whole volume, from the earliest times. Nay, it is not a little remarkable, that the

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\* Psalm cxxii. 6.

† Jerem. xxix. 7.

very first passage in which prayer is recorded, happens to be the supplication of a Parent—the fervent wish of a Father for his Son;\* and the very next presents this same Parent before us, interceding with peculiar earnestness for the vilest of men.†

To return, however; let it be observed, that the human family, being of God's own creation and institution, it owes him, on this account, corresponding acknowledgment and worship. All his *works*, in all places of his *dominion*, are therefore called upon to praise him. All things which have been made by him, were made *for* him; and if this was the end he had in view, when nature itself was framed, it was especially the end with regard to man, in his individual, and relative, and social capacity. If this is true, as to nature in all its branches, it is still more so of the system as a whole: if it is true of the individual, it is still more so of the systems or constitutions which he has framed: if true, of the man as a solitary being, still more so of the Family: if true, as to the Christian, still more so of the Church.

With regard to a Family, in particular, it is more especially bound to own its dependence and subjection to its Divine author, because it is the foundation or first cause of all society, whether moral, political, or religious. Hence Abraham obtained the testimony of God's highest approbation: hence, long before the Mosaic economy was in existence, there were sacrifices *peculiar* to families, as already noticed, when the Father acted as the administrator. Thus, Job offered burnt-offerings for himself and for his Children, and Jacob for his. This is particularly worthy of remark, since, though we have no intimation whatever on the subject, there must have been a revelation here from God; for though the duty rises necessarily

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\* Gen. xvii. 18.

† Gen. xviii. 24.



out of the Constitution itself, the *form* of it must have been regulated by his will. For the office and duty of a priest, or an offerer of family sacrifices, neither Job nor Jacob had their warrant from the light or law of nature. Such an office depended on institution; and this institution proves to demonstration the early and peculiar regard of God for the family of human beings. Nor did even the Mosaic economy altogether abolish a practice, which stood on far more ancient grounds. So the *family* of Jesse had a yearly sacrifice, that is, a free-will offering and sacred feast, when the various branches all assembled, even in mature life, to acknowledge a source from whence they had derived such blessings.\* Granting that, in this instance, the whole were pretended, no such *pretence* would have been sustained, had such things not been *customary*, to a certain extent, although not so frequent as in the patriarchal age, or before the appointment of the tribe of Levi to act as priests.

Independently, however, of all this evidence with any rational Christian Parent, I may confirm and establish his mind on much higher ground than even that which these pointed examples afford. To such a Parent I might say—“Without hesitation, you will admit that your obligations to your family are to be measured now, and on the day of final account, by your *capacity*—as a Man by your natural, as a Christian by your spiritual capacity? And however you may feel conscious of falling short daily, that you are under obligation to honor God to the utmost limit of this capacity? You will also allow that, standing where you do, you are not now, like a solitary orphan without relatives, to be regarded only as a single individual? God himself, your Creator, your Saviour, and your Judge, regards you as the *head* of a *family*, and therefore,

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\* 1 Samuel xx. 6.

in possession of a sacred trust, you have the care of souls. Now, if you really do measure obligation by capacity, then will you also at once allow, that you must do what you can, that He may, from your Family, have as much honor as possible.

Without hesitation you will also allow that God daily *preserves* you? And does he not also preserve your Family? But if he preserves, he has a right of property in each and all under your roof. Shall He not, therefore, have from you acknowledgment of this? If daily he preserves, shall he not be daily acknowledged? And if acknowledged at all, how ought he to be so, if not upon your knees? And how can they know this, if they do not *hear* it?

Without hesitation you will also allow that you are a *social* as well as a reasonable being? And often have you, therefore, felt how much the soothing influence of their sweet society has sustained you under cares, and trials, and grief itself. O! surely then, as a social being, you owe to them social worship; nor should you ever forget, that, in ancient days, there *was* social worship here before it could be any where else. Nay, even after the gates of Zion were known, next to them, Jehovah continued to love the dwellings of Jacob. And why? Because, though less public, they furnished the nearest resemblance to those gates; and his regard for the Church is magnified by its rising above that of the Family. The love of God is represented as being greater in degree; it was therefore on the same account.

To some minds, the obligation to Family Worship will receive additional support, from reference to the *connection* in which prayer is enforced. But before noticing this, it may be remarked, that between all the relative duties incumbent on man, there is not only a powerful and natural connection, but the performance of one such

duty often only lays the foundation for the performance of others, or naturally leads to them as incumbent. The division of the Sacred Writings into chapters and verses, useful only for reference, has not only obscured this connection, but, in the course of ages, it has created a number of false associations, as well as prevented many from feeling, as they ought, the indissoluble obligations under which they are laid. This connection is indeed apparent, and often striking, even as the Scriptures are generally printed; but, owing to the divisions referred to, it requires to be much more frequently pointed out.\*

Thus, after the relative duties of Parent and Child, of Servant and Master, are mentioned by Paul in his Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and by Peter in

\* There are few subjects which a public expositor should be more solicitous that his hearers should comprehend, than that of the *connection* of divine truth, or the manner in which it is introduced to the notice, or enforced on the conscience, of the reader; and it is one which has become far more binding on us, whether ministers or hearers, owing to the universal use of Bibles, divided by fallible men into chapters and verses—"a singular destiny to which no other book has ever been subjected! In all other works, the index, or concordance, or subordinate matter, is fashioned so as to be subordinate to the original work; but in the Bible alone, the text and substance of the word is disfigured, in order to be adapted to the concordance that belongs to it! (a book, by the way, which many a reader never saw), and hence the notion of its being perused has been too often sacrificed to that of its being referred to. In consequence of this division, too, the Bible is to the eye, upon opening it, rather a book of reference than a book of perusal and study; and it is to be feared that this circumstance makes it more frequently used merely as such. At least it is far too often referred to for verifying a quotation merely; and then, without observing the preceding or following context, which stands as so much independent matter, it is shut or returned to the shelf. Now, what book can be fundamentally understood if consulted only in this manner?"† Indeed, of all the ordeals through which any work ever passed, I know not one which, in itself, is more calculated to

† See the Introduction to Reeve's Bible.

his First Epistle, it has been remarked, that the subject of prayer, one of the most important branches of Family Worship, is introduced. In the Colossians this connection is very obvious and striking. "Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal: knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven—Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

In conclusion, I query if that beautiful form of prayer which our blessed Lord gave to his followers, does not involve an argument in favor of Family prayer, nay, of *daily Family devotion*. It is worthy of remark, that, in the sixth chapter of Matthew, after he had directed his disciples with regard to private prayer, he did not stop there. In the seventh verse, he begins to use the plural number, and, proceeding to a social act of worship, he

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mislead, and one which, if it is not guarded against, habitually, by the reader, will more effectually conceal from him its force or drift, as well as its beauties. To this simple circumstance alone may be traced whole libraries of wordy and unprofitable religious controversy. It has shattered the line of argument into fragments, and has minced the fine and powerful vein of thought into separate and detached aphorisms. If these endless divisions (useful only for reference) are not vigilantly watched, the divine thread of a historical detail, and the beautiful lines of a parabolical picture, will not be observed, or they will be misunderstood—the nature and genius of Hebrew poetry, on which the pith and argument of its stanza may depend, and the occasionally abrupt, yet irresistible and correctly logical conclusions of Paul, have suffered equally from the same cause. This circumstance, in itself so insignificant, is, however, of such moment, that it is impossible to say how much it has contributed to misunderstanding among Christians, or how far it has thrown us back in understanding the record itself. In the meanwhile the reader should, at least, be aware of its having so far marred the moral symmetry of divine revelation. One day, in England, several years ago, I recollect of its being remarked as a feature in the character of some Christians resident in North Britain, that, upon any quotation from Scripture being introduced on a given subject, if any question arose, they would say, *But what is the connection?* Were this practice universal, the advantages would be incalculable.

refers to the prayers of such as *could pray together daily*. In this most comprehensive prayer, after giving to God that place and honor which corresponds to the first table of the moral law, he descends to matters of *daily* and *common* interest in a family; and among these, here instructing the poorest Parent how to dismiss inordinate anxiety as to the common provision for this little band, he directs him to pray—"Our Father who art in heaven—give us *this day* our *daily* bread." The petition immediately preceding this had been—"thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Now, I would only ask, if, over the wide world, the will of God *were* done, by whom would, nay, by whom could this petition, in general, fall to be offered, if not by the Parent at the head of his Family, to whom, as an instrument under God, we look for the provision of such daily sustenance? Or, I ask, can a more beautiful morning-picture be conceived, than that of the Fathers below thus beginning the day? Meanwhile, should the solitary Christian, retiring to his closet, and carrying the social spirit of Christianity along with him, use this form, unquestionably he will be heard; and in the house of God, leaving the world behind us, let us do the same occasionally, but still in form and spirit, this will ever remain a *week-day social* Family prayer.

II. *The Abuse of Family Worship*.—The obligation to this delightful duty being fully admitted, before proceeding to the subject itself, I cannot help noticing one most melancholy and dangerous prostitution of it; I mean *the form without the power*. Thousands, at least in this country, profess to feel a horror of such a translation of Scripture as this—"Do penance, and believe the Gospel." The vows and the satisfactions of antichrist we denounce; but what is the form of Family Worship, by unregenerate Parents, if not penance? And such assuredly it is often

felt to be by both Parents and Children. In some Families this form is only occasional; in others it is gone about regularly, perhaps once a-week, on Sabbath-day, or only on Sabbath-evening. Now, I not only inquire, where is the authority, but what is the use of all this? A burden, at best, on the head of the Family, it is, at the same time, rendering Christianity itself disgusting to all under that roof. And why should not the sound of such a form be as painful to my ear as the sound of the monastic whip? With the body, separated from the soul, what can we do? After death, the fairest frame must soon be consigned by us to its native element, the dust; and what, then, can the Almighty do with the form of godliness without the power? Offensive to him, must it not very soon also be removed entirely out of his sight?

Have I a reader, at any time, who is disposed to object here, and say, "But how is all this? After lamenting over the degeneracy and the wide-spreading ungodliness of the times, that fruitful subject of declamation in every age, have I not heard my very minister address himself to the prayerless families in his audience, and exhort them, in so many words, *to set up*, as he called it, Family Worship? Did he not represent this to them as a good work, and urge them to lose no time, but *immediately* to begin it?"\* All this, my friend, is very probable. Not only have such indiscriminate, not to say unskilful and unwise addresses been tendered from the pulpit; they have been issued from the press. If you happen, however, to have perused these pages thus far, I hope it is not expecting too much, when I suppose that, next to the importance of the truths and duties revealed in Scripture, you now place

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\* By *immediate* in this connection, the author means *next in order*; and hence represents the duty referred to as not the immediate one, though he holds that there should be no delay in its performance.—AMER. EDITOR.

the *order* of these, whether in the way of enforcement on our part or compliance on yours? and that if this order is disregarded either by us or you, the consequences may be very serious indeed.

Yes; if the thing itself, the form only of Family Worship is painful; the manner in which it has been actually enforced by some, and in effect by others, is in some respects much more so. And, oh! could I hope to reach the ear of men professing to be the ministers of Christ, nay, of many who really are so, who thus address an audience, I should respectfully, but very seriously entreat them to reflect, and earnestly remonstrate with them. To such I would say, "You know well that there is such a thing as being 'unskilful in the word of righteousness!' and what if this should prove an unskilfulness for which there is no apology? Surely there is a line, an all-important line of distinction, between *illustrating a subject—explaining man's obligation—taking both as evidences of present guilt and present danger*, on the one hand, and *our enforcing an IMMEDIATE compliance* on the other? For a man to neglect the former is an error of great magnitude, but the last error is worse than the first. Indeed, with the solitary exception of those ideas and arguments, warnings and invitations, which involve the necessity and obligation of immediate conversion to God, of immediate repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, the last error is, in fact, driving down all that we have built.

Between a man's *various* obligations and his *immediate* obligation, I would farther say, there is an essential difference; a difference by which the whole course of our ministry should be regulated, so as that it should be not only seen, but, if possible, *felt* by all. This distinction with their fellow-creatures multitudes observe daily, and why should not we in a ministry for God? You desire your Servant to pay for you a sum of money, and, in order to

this, desire him also to go and receive the amount from another individual to meet the demand. To pay the money is his duty ; and you blame him if he does not do so ; but this was not his *immediate* duty. The obligation of every man to worship God in his family, equally with every other Christian duty, is undoubted ; since it is the duty of every man to repent and believe the Gospel. This obligation, too, has been already illustrated when enforcing Family Government ; but still this is not the first and present business of the unregenerate man. To this, *as yet*, even God does not call him, nor must we. The conversion of the soul itself, and not the result of such conversion, is his immediate concern. To disregard this order, much more to confound it, is at our peril ; for, instead of awakening this individual, the usual issue with persons attempting Christian duties, without an interest in Christ himself, will be the result. Whatever duty you thus enforce, and tell him to begin and *try*, so far as *your* direction goes, it will first delude—then harden,—and, if God himself do not interpose, ultimately destroy him.

Let any man know, if you will, and as you ought, that Family Worship, in all its branches, is his incumbent duty : if you will, and as you ought, take his neglect of it as an *evidence* of his living without God, and of the divine displeasure resting on him and his house ; or if he has been attempting it in form only, take this also as an *evidence* of his being far gone indeed in self-deception ; but, oh ! be not you the instrument of such a man sitting down in self-satisfaction.

It is true, indeed, that, in the wide and delightful compass of Divine Revelation, I have many subjects which I must both illustrate and enforce ; but I believe my ministry, with all its imperfections, will be acceptable, only in proportion as I naturally and forcibly, or, in other words, scripturally introduce them ; *not* in the way of requesting



the unconverted to conform immediately, which they cannot do, but in the way of argument or evidence, enforcing from each, the *absolute and immediate* necessity of repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh! how many are the arguments which are thus presented! Happy and useful must that minister be who hath his quiver full of them! Coming round, then, always, naturally, to this one point, I may then succeed, not in prevailing with a man merely to begin a form only, but in causing him to arise and go to his Father: in causing him to return home to God through Christ Jesus alone. I grant that this is not to be learnt in a day; and I am aware that it has been asked—"But how *can* you do this? There are some, if not various things revealed in Scripture, to which one must advert, which seem to have little or no connection with repentance and faith in the first instance." Indeed! Then I answer, that, like a village which has no road to the capital, if you are drawing up a map of the country, it is of no moment though you leave all such out of it. But what if, after this, not having traced the land with sufficient care, it should be shown to you, that there *is* such a road, direct and easy, and that from this village too, it is even a part of the king's highway? Then does it become your business to trace this road, otherwise your map will at last be found defective and even dangerous. So, undoubtedly, if we study divine truth, in all its inimitably beautiful *connections*, and study it, as we ought, deeply; between every feeling, and doctrine, and duty, personal, relative, and social, of the Christian, and conversion to God, we shall find a natural and necessary connection. Hence the necessity for giving ourselves wholly to these things: hence the necessity for being "skilful in the word of righteousness."

The manner of addressing the unconverted, is the

grand trial of every minister's skill ; and by every man it requires to be deeply studied, otherwise the enforcement and the performance of penance, under another name, must ensue. To my younger brethren in the ministry, especially, I would therefore earnestly recommend this subject ; and to them, in particular, I would still farther most affectionately address a few considerations of no inferior moment.

If all duty consists in the genuine operations and expressions of the heart, be careful how you at any time, and in any way, compromise this matter with any part of your audience, however attentively they listen, while as yet they give no evidence of a heart reconciled to God. You may indeed, and you ought to illustrate many subjects, and show wherein our obligation to comply consists ; but should you, forgetting yourself, urge them to commence external actions, or any such exercises as may be performed without the love of God, what is this but unwittingly betraying the just authority of God over the heart, and admitting the performance of that, which, if offered to yourself from a fellow-creature, you would despise ? Nor is such an address less injurious to your hearers, than it is derogatory to the authority of God. It will tend fatally to quiet their consciences, and to cherish an opinion, that, having complied with your request, they are doing that which is pleasing and acceptable to God. You may think that this is bearing hard upon the unconverted, and reducing them to a terrible situation. This I admit ; but since such is the situation of every man in a state of nature, so far from improving this by palliation, by saying that you hope better things of them though you thus speak, or exhorting them to worship God in the first instance, or in the best manner they can, you are only rendering their situation still more terrible ! Think, too, for a moment, on the actual cruelty of such mode of

address. It is calculated to render the unconverted *easy* while yet in danger; and is not this cruel? Instead of rendering the situation of those under your eye *easy*, it certainly ought to be your aim to move them from every refuge, not for the sake of plunging them into despair, but that, through you, they may submit to the righteousness of God, and flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel; that through you the justification of which God approves, may, by faith in Jesus, become all their own. Most solemnly, therefore, ought you often to assure this part of your audience, that, do what else they may, their case is daily waxing worse and worse! If they profess to pray, and do frequent the house of God, there is in this, to God, while they so remain, nothing acceptable, and yet to absent themselves will make matters worse. Whether they eat or drink, wax rich or poor, plough the soil or the deep, gather in the harvest, or better their condition in this world, all is iniquity! "*Incense is an abomination: it is iniquity even the solemn meeting.*" To die, you have to say, is to be plunged in endless wo; yet to *live*, if in enmity or indifference, is much worse: since this is, alas! only heaping up wrath against the day of wrath.

"But what," it will be said, under such preaching, "what can mankind do? If they go forward, it seems destruction awaits them; if on this hand or on that it is still the same." And was it otherwise with the hearers of a Peter or a Paul, who excited such cries as these—"What must I do to be saved? Men and brethren, what shall we do?" All the answers, then, which you can give, and which you need to give, are contained, in great variety, in the Sacred Volume.

With regard to *repentance* towards God:—"I came," said Jesus, "to call sinners to repentance. I came to heal the broken-hearted." "Him," said Peter, "hath God

exalted to his right hand, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins." Jesus therefore preached, "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." His apostles "went out and preached that men should repent." "Repent ye, therefore," said Peter, "and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "For God," said Paul, "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." "I showed," said he, "first to them of Damascus and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coast of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." "Ye know—how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you, publicly and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

As to *faith*, hear our blessed Redeemer himself how he addressed his hearers:—"While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "The Father," said John the Baptist, "loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "These things," said John the Evangelist, "are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing ye might have life through his name." "The word is nigh thee," said

Paul, "in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach:—that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness (that is, justification), and with the mouth confession is made to salvation; for the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."\*

In conclusion, however, on this subject, that such abuses should exist, not only in reference to Family Worship, but worship in any form, will not be matter of surprise to any Christian, who well remembers where it is said,—“This know also, that in the *last days* perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*”

III. *The best Seasons for Family Devotion.*—Obliged as I am to worship Jehovah in my Family, and possessing the only spirit which he will or can accept in every service—a willing mind—and therefore inclined, nay, bent upon this delightful service,—then will I find some time for it, and my Family must find time to come together. The ordinances of day and night, and the regularity of their

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\* For several of the sentiments contained in this division, see Fuller's Works, vol. iv.

succession, alike admonish me to regulate my affairs accordingly. As there is One above who maketh the outgoings of the morning to rejoice, and the evenings to descend in peace over me, at these seasons especially should I acknowledge him: at these seasons should I seek him who, not only, in the beginning, made the seven stars and Orion, the greater light also to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, but who now also, with so much mercy and long-suffering, and with such regularity, "maketh the day dark, and it is night, and then turneth the shadow of death into the morning."

Have these daily alternations no voice? Do they carry with them no signification whatever? How was it then that the morning and evening were so generally regarded even by heathen nations, as the appropriate period for some acknowledgment of God? And if Paul could refer to nature's teaching, about a matter comparatively so insignificant as the hair of the head, shall we not here appeal to the plain and unerring dictates of nature? That we should be compassed about daily with the vast and merciful vicissitudes of day and night, without any disposition to daily adoration, must argue great stupidity and ingratitude of mind indeed. The Christian who contemplates even the material universe only, with the persuasion that it is at once the *workmanship* and the *property* of the Almighty, cannot possibly so proceed. "It is a good thing," he says,

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord,  
And to sing praises unto thy name, O most High:  
To show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning,  
And thy faithfulness every night;—  
For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work:  
I will triumph in the works of thy hands."

The mind of the sacred writer seems so fully made up on such principles as these, that he immediately signifies it to

be only "a brutish man" who knoweth not; nay, even a fool, or foolish man, who doth not understand this.\*

With regard to the seasons for devotion, however, we are not left to be regulated only by the signs of heaven or the voice of nature. There have been ordinances of divine service intended to enforce the same subject, and at these seasons. Has the reader never marked *one* condition, on which Jehovah condescended to meet with the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and there speak to them?—the condition, on which he would dwell, or, as Lewis, in his *Hebrew Antiquities*, has said somewhat quaintly, "keep house" among them, and be their God?—the condition, on which they were from generation to generation to be confirmed in the persuasion, that he was the Lord their God who brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that he might dwell amongst them? All these favors he suspended, upon condition of their offering, without intermission, the morning and evening sacrifice. Now, if the primary design of these sacrifices was to remind the people of God at that period, of the sacrifice of Christ, by which alone at last they were taken away, shall we not remember Him, at these seasons, who was the substance and fulfilment of them all? And even then, when these were offered, how are we to suppose the inmates were employed, at such seasons, in those "dwellings of Jacob" which Jehovah is represented as loving next only to the temple and the temple-worship? It would even seem, that, when driven out, or far separated, from his tabernacle or his temple, the pious Jew could not forget those devoted hours. Looking in that direction, his language then was—"Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

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\* Psalm xcii. 1—6.

There are, however, other considerations than these, which might be adduced, for enforcing the important duty of prayer or worship, in the morning and evening of every day, not only in the chamber, but in the family. "Stated and regular seasons are indispensable to the effectual performance of all business. Method, proverbially styled the soul of business, cannot exist without such seasons. Irregularity, which is the prevention or the ruin of all valuable efforts, grows of course out of irregular distributions of time. That which is done at accidental seasons only, is not done at all; but no duty demands *regularity and method more than prayer*. There is in all men naturally a strong indisposition to pray. Stated seasons, therefore, returning at regular periods, are peculiarly necessary to preserve this duty in its full vigor. He who prays at such seasons, will always remember this duty; will form his schemes of life so as to provide the proper place for performing it; will be reproached by his conscience for neglecting it; will keep alive the spirit of prayer from one season to another, so as to render the practice delightful; and will be preserved, uninterruptedly, in the practice, by the strong influence of habit. He who prays at accidental seasons only, or then in form attends to this exercise, will first neglect, and finally desist from such a practice."

"Now, the morning and evening are seasons peculiarly fitted for the regular returns of prayer. They occur at intervals perfectly convenient; terminate successively our sleep and our labor; are seasons necessarily distinguished; remind us of all that for which we should pray; and are effectual means of establishing in us immoveable habits of devotion. They involve every thing, therefore, which can be either asked or wished for this interesting purpose."

"As these are seasons eminently advantageous for secret prayer, so they are almost the only *possible* seasons for the



united devotion of families. Then, and then only, are all the members customarily present ; then the family business is either not begun or ended, and all are at leisure to employ themselves in the worship of God. Strangers, then, do not intrude, and in this manner prevent the performance of the duty. Every thing, therefore, concurs at these seasons to promote and establish the method, regularity, and habit, which, necessary always, are indispensable where numbers are concerned.”\*

IV. *The profitable Performance of Family Worship.*—This interesting exercise is generally admitted to include—Praise—the perusal of the Sacred Scriptures—and Prayer.

1. *Family Praise.*—Unquestionably this is one of the most delightful ways of “showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.” To the younger branches of the household it conveys an evident proof, that the hearts of their Parents are touched, and that to them praise is pleasant ; and long after they are cold in the dust, the recollection of these hallowed moments may, and, in most instances, will return with peculiar and most salutary effect. For what signifies all our talk, whether to Children or Servants, if we discover not at such stated intervals, that our interest in divine things has furnished to us ground for thanksgiving, and the voice of melody? And since the fury of the Almighty is in reserve, for the Families that call not upon his name, how or where is God “daily to be praised,” if the voice of rejoicing and salvation is not to be heard in the tabernacles of the righteous? No, this is an appropriate, an incumbent, and a comely exercise ; and often has it most powerfully commanded the willing admiration of only an occasional visi-

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\* Dwight.

tant. When the Children are all seated, according to their age; when every Servant knows at once, and fills the appropriate place at Family Worship, and the Book of God is opened; how is it, that, before the Parent begins, the eye of the Mother, or of the Christian friend, turns so involuntarily round the room? Is it not because Family order, which is always an interesting and pleasing sight, is now about to show itself in one of its most endearing aspects? Besides, when it is remembered, alas, alas! that the most affectionate and interesting Family must sooner or later be broken up, in the very songs of such Families, there are touches which must affect the tenderest strings of the human heart. Hear, for example, while they celebrate the praises of their only certain dwelling-place—Hear their grave sweet melody going over such lines as these:—

“Thou, Lord, through ev’ry changing scene,  
Hast to thy saints a refuge been;  
Through ev’ry age, eternal God,  
Their pleasing home, their safe abode.

In thee our fathers sought their rest;  
In thee our fathers still are blest;  
And while the tomb confines their dust,  
In thee their souls abide and trust.

So when this pilgrimage is o’er,  
And we shall dwell in flesh no more,  
To thee our sep’rate souls shall come,  
And find in thee a surer home.

To thee our infant race we leave:  
Them may their father’s God receive;  
That voices, yet unform’d, may raise  
Succeeding hymns of humble praise.”

The nature and spirit, as well as the performance of social praise, might be farther explained; but as the writer has attempted an illustration of each of these,

at some length, elsewhere, he need not at present enlarge.\*

2. *Perusal of the Sacred Volume.*—This most interesting and important branch of domestic religion, if attended to with becoming solemnity, as the voice of God, cannot fail to acquaint the whole family, in a greater or less degree, with the general contents and main design of divine revelation; as, without such daily perusal of some portion, I may truly assert, not only that some of the inmates, whether Children or Servants, may and will remain grossly ignorant, but the Family, as such, will be found extremely confused and superficial, and, consequently, at variance in their ideas respecting divine truth. Here, however, I require to remind Parents, as the conductors of Family Worship, of the all-important distinction between the Scriptures, as a book, and all other volumes whatever. Other volumes might be read aloud, with some benefit to your Families, in many frames of mind, and some in almost any; while, in regard to the Inspired Writings, every thing depends upon the *dispositions* in which you generally open and read them. There are, in the Family, unprofitable readers, and there may be even in the pulpit; but wherever these exist, the baneful consequence must follow: there are to be found also unprofitable hearers, or mere lookers-on; and these too, observe, as a *consequence* of the dispositions of the reader. The meekest of men could not be permitted to go over Jordan into Canaan, because he once “*spake* unadvisedly with his lips.” What then will become of the Parent, and what impression can he expect to produce, who *reads* unadvisedly, and thus reads the words of Him who gave us existence, and who is graciously unfolding

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\* See the Preface to an arranged Selection of Hymns, adapted for Divine Worship; third edition, 1823.

those eternal truths, according to which the final and everlasting state of the reader, and his hearers, is to be unchangeably determined?

One essential disposition, therefore, on the part of a Parent, when opening this book daily, is that of reverence. Holy men of God spake these words as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; how necessary then must it be that we should read them as influenced by Him? One of these men said, "My heart standeth in awe of thy word;" but since his day, Jehovah hath also spoken to us by his Son, and said of Him, "They will reverence my Son." The favorite of Heaven is said to be the man who trembleth at the word of the Lord; but there can be no doubt, that such veneration is materially promoted, by a regular and reverent perusal of the Sacred Record itself. The finest human composition must lose somewhat by every successive reading, but with the Inspired Volume, familiarity, far from generating contempt, absolutely begets reverence; while, for the farther discovery of divine truth, this disposition is at once indispensable and invaluable. "In the word of the living God," says such a man, "should I find any thing enjoined, whether as a matter of faith or of Christian duty, conscious of its being imposed by that *Father of Spirits*, who has both right to enact laws, which must therefore be just, because he enacts them, and power to punish the transgression of them with no less than eternal death, I then leave roving, and see where to cast anchor. I think it my part, without disputing them, to obey his orders, and acquiesce more in that imperious, 'Thus saith the Lord,' than in a whole dialogue of Plato, or epistle of Seneca. I therefore love to build my morals, as well as my creed, upon the Rock, and esteeming nothing but the true, and proper, and strict sense of the Scripture to be indispensably obligatory, either as to faith or practice, it is no wonder if I study God's

will most in that book, wherein alone I think it revealed ; and truly, finding in myself no motive more justly prevalent to obedience than his right to exact it, who requires it, few men are more ready than I am, in distinguishing what indeed God says, from what man would make him say." In one word, "I use the Scriptures, not as an arsenal, to be resorted to only for arms and weapons to defend this or that party, or to defeat its enemies ; but as a matchless temple where I delight to be ; to contemplate the beauty, the symmetry, and the magnificence of the structure, and to increase my awe, and excite my devotion to the Deity there preached and adored !"\*

Nor is gratitude less incumbent in daily Family reading. It was often said of the posterity of Abraham, and first said to them by God himself, who alone knows wherein earthly happiness consists, "Happy art thou, O Israel ; who is like unto thee?" And what advantage, then, had the Jew ? and what profit was there in circumcision ? Much every way : *chiefly*, because that unto them were committed the Oracles of God. The Oracles of God !—which not merely explain the cause of all sorrow and of death itself, but point out the way to pardon and perpetual day ; which reveal a Saviour, and unfold, as far as mortal language may, the glorious subjects which interest and engage, and so fill the capacious faculties, as to produce the homage of prostration in the spirits of the just, and the burning seraphim before the throne. Surely, then, gratitude well becomes us when perusing the pages from which even angels have derived instruction with gratitude ;† nay, which even the Messiah himself read and expounded, and which he counselled us to search. "Should God have been pleased to instruct us, as he did Jonah, by the shadow of a weed, it had been

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\* The Honorable Robert Boyle.

† Ephes. iii. 10.

our duty to acquiesce; how much more then, when he vouchsafes to speak to us in almost as glorious a manner as he did to Moses; in a Scripture that hath such resemblances to the sanctuary; which contained the law of God; exhibited the mercy-seat; and in which the two golden cherubims, like the two precious and harmonious testaments, looked towards one another, and both towards the mercy-seat that typified the Messiah?" Surely, then, it becomes us, "not only with acquiescence but gratitude, to look upon God's having appointed the Scripture to be the light in which his Spirit regularly shines upon his Church, since the luminary is as well refulgent as the choice of it His, whose blessing can prosper any means of grace, as without his blessing no means of grace can prosper."\*

I need scarcely add a disposition to receive as true what God has said, since a captious spirit was one which the Saviour himself regarded as the most desperate of cases. "Why," said He, "do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word." They would not give Him so much as one patient hearing, although He had condescended to say to them, only the day before—"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Clearly intimating, that there is required, if I may so express it, a disposition in the eye of the mind towards the object proposed, in order to any man discerning at once the excellence and the origin of what is taught. The impatient and the querulous must therefore be left till they come to reflection, or they must perish; but I introduce these few remarks chiefly with a view to remind the Christian Parent, that faith (without which a disposition to receive the word, as it is in truth the word

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\* Boyle.

of God, cannot exist), is not natural to any man, and that it is often weak indeed even in those who possess it. See, then, that your faith, however weak, be *influential*—see that it be *unfeigned*; then, before the power and authority of this daily reading, will you find every vain imagination in yourself cast down, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and every thought brought into captivity, so as to be charmed with obedience to Christ Jesus.

Finally, with regard to requisite dispositions, if the Scriptures are read without a spirit of expectation, there can be no desire. To excite this habitually expecting spirit, this watching for information, only let me ask, Where is the book to be found, from which you not only may daily derive *new* ideas, and from which you can reason *negatively* with great profit, as some old expositors have done with such effect? Yes; well may you “adore the fullness of the Scriptures:” for in that book, as Mr. Boyle says, rising upon the idea of Lord Bacon, “there is such a fullness, that oftentimes it says much by saying nothing; as not only its expressions but its silences are teaching: like a dial, in which the shadow as well as the light informs us.” Family reading, on the part of a Parent, ought therefore, unquestionably, to be associated with a spirit of desire or reverent inquiry, and more especially since it is to be immediately followed by Family Prayer. The man who expects to find little or nothing in his daily reading, will insensibly turn the means into an end, which is a flagrant abuse, and sink down to the low and dull ground of what is called, though falsely, “doing duty.” But should the Parent only possess the desire or spirit for discovering the mind of God in the Scriptures; should he thus be found watching daily at the gates of wisdom, and thus waiting at the posts of her doors; I am saved at once from almost any directions as to the *manner*

of reading. He will then certainly read as one who himself expects either to be gratified or refreshed with what he has known, and relished, or admired before; or as one who expects to observe somewhat which he had never till then discovered. Yes, if he is expecting information, and watching for excitement, this will serve instead of many, if not any directions; for this will induce a habit of reading deliberately—of reading distinctly—and with what is of the greatest moment, in promoting attention and abiding impression—occasional pauses. This desire of his own too, accompanied as it is with such delight, the Parent will as certainly wish to impart to his Children and Servants, so that the explanation, occasionally, of particular words, will follow of course—a practice which is of essential importance, if interest is to be kept up, or ideas fixed in the mind.

With dispositions such as these, the leader of daily Family Devotion cannot fail to derive immense benefit himself from thus daily reading aloud to his Family the living Oracles of God. Such a man will not only be charmed by seeing different passages interchange light with each other; not only will he be convinced that the doctrines there are of importance, but he will own, that even those truths which require but few perusals to be understood, require many to be duly impressed; “our preposterously partial memories being but too rarely like quicksilver, in which nothing will sink but gold.” “The word of God,” he will say, “must not be as a passenger, or sparingly entertained in our minds, but must dwell there, and that richly; for that word which James pronounces to be ‘able to save our souls,’ he describes as a graff, which must not only be closely embraced by that wherein it is to fructify, but must continue there, to bring the stock and the graff, if I may so speak, to concorporate.”\*

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\* Boyle.



Such a man, it is true, hears some persons complain of the obscurity of Scripture ; but all that obscurity of which they complain, to him has often appeared merely like a mist, which seems thicker at a distance than when you enter it. Many a time has he entered this prosperously, and found, to his joyful experience, that *that* which at a distance overawed him, was not intended to frustrate industry, but to check the presumptuous, or punish indolence. Nay, even as to profound obscurities, or the dazzling and sublime of Scripture, this daily reader says—“the apostle’s motive to hospitality, ‘Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares,’ will, without being overstretched, take in those texts of Scripture with which we are unacquainted. For in them we may easily, with Abraham and Lot, entertain greater guests than we are aware of ; and who, when their true condition appears, may recompense our entertainment of them, by showering down blessings upon us, and rescuing us from the company and destiny of the wicked.”

Great, alas ! are the evils, and immense the loss, which have resulted from reading the Sacred Volume, during Family Worship, in a slovenly and irreverent manner, or even in the absence of such dispositions as have now been recommended ; and this must form my apology for dwelling on the subject so long : while, on the other hand, I feel the more disposed to enforce such reverent and grateful perusal of the Sacred Volume ; and such disposedness to receive this word as the truth of God, which effectually worketh in all who believe ; and such eager desire after discovering His *mind* there ; from a deep persuasion that great and egregious ignorance still remains in the world, as to the precise meaning of the sacred text : because also, I am fully assured, that many a such devout daily reader might discover a ray of light, or a hidden

beauty, which has hitherto escaped the searching eye of the deepest divine. No hurry of business, nor any lawful occupation of this transitory and uncertain life, can form any apology for one *short* historical or prophetic passage not being read in the morning, and one devotional or epistolary passage in the evening of the day.\* And no business of life whatever need prevent such discovery as ought ever to be the object of every reader: nor when the humblest Christian comes daily with a degree of this thirst after truth, will any occupation be permitted to prevent him. Certainly, it was not a man who had nothing else to do; nor was it a man sitting down deliberately, in a professional way, who once said, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day," or every day. "I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation: I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts."†

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\* I have said short, because this it may require to be with some Families during six days of the week. Besides, this will lead to reverent and *deliberate* reading, without which it cannot be expected that musing or meditation should ever take place afterwards. On Sabbath, however, there is no need for such limitation. The *day* is the Lord's; and in Judea of old, on that day the morning and evening sacrifice was, by divine appointment, doubled.

† "When I first began attentively to read the Scriptures, and, according to my custom when I read books, whereof I have a promising expectation, to mark in the margin the passages that seemed to deserve a peculiar notice or reflection, I marked but here and there some verses in a chapter; but when upon a greater familiarity with the idiotisms, or peculiarity of expression, the sense and the applicableness of Scripture, I came to survey it, I then, in some places, marked the whole chapter, and, in most others, left much fewer texts than before, unfurnished with some mark of reference. And whereas, at my entrance, I took even the choicest part of the Bible to be at best but like some Indian province, wherein, though mines and gems were more abundant than in other countries, yet were they but sparingly to be met with here and there. After a competent stay, my ensuing perusals presented it me, if not as a royal jewel made up of gold and precious stones, yet (which is

Oh! were the Sacred Scriptures only thus daily read in Christian Families, the effects could not, in the nature of things, remain long hid; nor could these be long confined only to a blessing on the humble habitation of the righteous. Then would the low estimate, which, alas! many entertain of the written word, be tenable no more: then, too, would the great value of this instrument—this means to an end; for, after all that has been said, the Scriptures are only an instrument, and only a means to

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more glorious) like Aaron's breast-plate—a sacred jewel—the particular instructions for which were given by God himself, and which, besides the various flaming gems, set in fine gold, and placed in a mysterious order, was ennobled by that *Urim* and *Thummim*, wherein God vouchsafed to reveal himself to mortals; and which was adorned with so much cunning work in gold, with blue, purple, scarlet, and fine-twined linen, that the contrivance and workmanship lent a lustre to the glittering materials, without being obscured by them. This experiment keeps me from wondering to find in the inspired Poet's description of the man, to whom he attributes a blessedness, that his (*chaphatz*) delight is in the 'law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.' For the word other translations render *voluntas* and *studium*, ours has rendered delight. Indeed, the Hebrew will bear both senses, and seems there emphatically to signify, a study replenished with so much delight to the devout and intelligent prosecutors of it, that, like the hallelujahs of the blessed, it is at once a duty and a pleasure, an exercise and a recompense of piety. And, indeed, if God's blessing upon the devout Christian's study of that book do 'open his eyes to discern the hidden wonders' contained in it, he should, and he will, in imitation of the Psalmist in the same Psalm, say of his God, 'I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil,' and am as satisfied as navigators that discover unknown countries. And I must confess, that, when sometimes, with the apostles in the mount, I contemplate Moses and Elias talking with Christ, I mean the Law and the Prophets symphonizing with the Gospel, I cannot but, resemblingly transported with a like motive, exclaim with Peter, *It is good for me to be here*; and I cease to think the Psalmist a hyperbolist, for comparing the transcendent sweetness of God's word to that inferior one of honey; which is like it in nothing more than in that, of both their suavities, experience gives much more advantageous notions than descriptions can."—Boyle.

an end : but then would their true value and divine *intent* become both striking and most delightful : then would the Church begin to erect her head, and stand up, and shake herself from the dust of ages and generations : then would her members, not merely know how to behave themselves in the house of God, but then would the Church manifestly appear to be “ the Church of the *living* God ; ” nay, the very “ pillar, and ground, or stay of the truth.”

Let not, then, any Christian Parent, however humble his lot, or even scanty his fare, be diverted from endeavoring to drink deeply of such dispositions towards this thrice-blessed Book. His own progress in discovering the mind of God, though it should be slow at first, will cheer him on his way ; and a discovery, however small, will occasionally fill him with an admiration and joy akin to those which once animated our beloved brother Paul, when the very Spirit, by which he was writing at the moment, induced him to exclaim—“ O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord ? or who hath been his counsellor ? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again ? ” \*

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\* “ In this passage,” says Dr. Jebb, in his most interesting and valuable work, entitled, *Sacred Literature*, “ the continuity of the parallelism is maintained unbroken, and the style, both of thought and expression, is remarkable alike for elegance, animation, and profundity.” His translation is as follows :

O the depth of the riches, and the wisdom, and the knowledge of God !  
 How inscrutable are his judgments,  
 And untraceable his ways !  
 For who hath known the mind of the Lord ?  
 Or who hath been his counsellor ?  
 Or who hath first given to him,  
 And it shall be given to him again ?

The first line, he continues, proposes the subject—

O the depth of the riches, and the wisdom, and the knowledge of God !

Here also the encouraging thought presents itself, that the humblest, the poorest Christian can comprehend these weighty and profound expressions; while, by this daily and devout perusal of the Sacred Word, the same delight recurs in regard to another and another passage, till at last he ascends to glory everlasting. "There, discerning how exquisitely the several parts of Scripture are fitted to the several times, and persons, and occurrences wherein their all-foreseeing Author intended most to use them, he will then discern, not only a reconcileableness, but a friendship and perfect harmony betwixt those passages which here seemed most at variance; and will then discern, not only the sense of these obscurer passages, but the requisiteness of their having been written so obscurely."\* And there, like Abraham, even after he

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The notion of *depth*, as a quality attributed alike to God's riches—and wisdom—and knowledge, is first expanded in the next couplet:

How inscrutable are his judgments,  
And untraceable his ways!

Riches—wisdom—and knowledge, are then, in a fine epanados, enlarged upon in the inverted order:

*Knowledge*.—For who hath known the mind of the Lord?  
*Wisdom*.—Or who hath been his counsellor?  
*Riches*.—Or who hath first given unto him,  
And it shall be repaid him again?

"Let now the most skilfully executed *cento*, from the heathen classics, be compared with this finished scriptural Mosaic of Paul; the former, however imposing at the first view, will, on closer inspection, infallibly betray its patch-work jointing, and incongruous materials; while the latter, like the beauties of creation, not only bears the microscopic glance, but the more minutely it is examined, the more fully its exquisite organization is disclosed."

\* With this exception, the preceding extracts from Mr. Boyle are taken from his valuable tract, entitled, "Considerations touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures," written, at the request of his brother, Lord Broghill, partly in England, partly in another kingdom, and partly even on shipboard. Such was the language of this extraordinary man, when he had reached only the *twenty-sixth* year

was enthroned in glory, who is represented as testifying to the sufficiency and potency of the Sacred Word, will he possess a more profound conception of the "manifold wisdom of God."

3. *Family Prayer*.—As one reason for the heartless and dull spirit of many Parents, when engaged in prayer, is to be traced to their superficial acquaintance with the

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of his age; and his "Motives to the Love of God" were written when he was four years younger! These "Considerations," however, are only part of a larger volume, entitled, *An Essay on the Scripture*, and I presume may form but a small proportion of it. The writer has inquired for it repeatedly, when in London and Dublin, but in vain; and although it is said to have been published after the "Considerations," by Mr., afterwards Sir Peter Pett, attorney-general for Ireland, he has never been able to obtain even a sight of it, at any of the public libraries. If this work was really published, which is somewhat doubtful, from its being mentioned as No. 11 in the *Manuscripts* not inserted in his works; how much is it to be regretted, that the ideas of such a man should remain hid and unknown, respecting a book which he not only held in such profound veneration, and which he not only studied so diligently, but which he was so well qualified to explore, both by his deep and consistent piety as a Christian, and his abilities as a scholar, from his acquaintance with Hebrew and Greek, Chaldee and Syriac. In this work are to be found his thoughts respecting the last translation of the Bible, and the advantage of understanding the original languages of the Scriptures, as well as various other subjects. In the list of his Manuscripts, No. 10, which certainly has never seen the light, is entitled, "The Excellence of Christianity." Among these papers, too, are to be found his views of the "Causes of Atheism," "Considerations about Miracles," and "Whether Philosophy and Christianity contradict each other." These, as well as fifteen other theological tracts, and above thirty on philosophical subjects, all in manuscript, were, about the year 1743, in the possession of the Rev. Henry Miles, F. R. S., of Tooting, in Surrey; and it is long since the regret has been expressed at their not being examined, and such of them as are complete given to the public. If a late work, such as that ascribed to Milton, must not remain in concealment, although the authenticity of it is far from being yet established; of how much greater benefit to mankind, would the thoughts of Boyle prove, could the possessors of these manuscripts only be entreated to survey and communicate them?

Sacred Scriptures, and this as a necessary consequence of their superficial way of reading them; hence the importance of their being perused in the exercise of such dispositions as have been mentioned. As such readers will then no more be satisfied with knowing Scripture historically, or considering it casually, so also, upon their bended knees, will they desire to have their minds, not only impressed with its truths, but imbued with its spirit; while such a course of reading must, of necessity, ever be furnishing them with fresh materials for prayer.

And now, with the single exception of those hallowed moments, when the hearts of the flock, conjoined with their Shepherd, arise to the throne of God; there seems not to be, in this world, a single prospect so engaging and lovely to the eye of the Christian, "as a Family thus assembled in the morning for their affectionate devotions; combining piety to God, their common Parent, with tenderness to each other," and living through the day in conformity with such a commencement. "In the devotions of this little assembly, Parents pray for their Children, and Children for their Parents; the Husband for his Wife, and the Wife for her Husband; while Brothers and Sisters send up their requests to the throne of Infinite Mercy, to call down blessings on each other. Who, that wears the name of man, can be indifferent here? Must not the venerable character of the Parents, the peculiar tenderness of the conjugal union, the affectionate intimacy of the filial and fraternal relations; must not the nearness of relations long existing, the interchange of kindness long continued, and the oneness of interests long cemented,—all warm the heart, heighten the importance of every petition, and increase the fervor of every devotional effort?"\*

Independently, however, of all that is attractive to the

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\* Dwight.

outward eye, to the Christian Parent himself, who has been received into the divine favor under the sovereign shelter of his Mediator, and through his abounding merit alone, these morning Family devotions are productive of great personal advantage. Often does he, when thus engaged, feel an adoptive freedom, and nearness of access to God. Conscious that there is no spiritual blessing so great, and no evil so small, respecting which he may not address his Heavenly Father, whether for himself or those so dear to him, his prayers are circumstantial, without irreverent familiarity, and changing with the aspect of each returning day or revolving year, they are characteristic of the circumstances in which his Family stands at the moment. Certainly he does not thus descend to particulars, because Jehovah does not know them infinitely better than ever he can : but he feels it to be of value to himself, thus to intercede for and with others,—to be of importance to himself, as a Parent, thus to bear his charge on his heart before God ; and of value to all who are present, to hear the concerns of the entire family thus acknowledged, as originating with God, or laid down in reverent submission before him. Besides all this, he believes it to be the law of Heaven, that such blessings as he implores, are to be obtained from thence, only by prayer. “God,” he will say, “does not promise to those who want that they shall *have*, but to those who *ask* ; nor to those who need that they shall *find*, but to those who *seek*. So far, therefore, from his previous knowledge of our wants being a ground of objection to prayer, it is the true ground for our application. Were he not Knowledge itself, our information would be of as little use as our application would be, were he not Goodness itself.”\*

It is, however, very much to be feared, that many Christians are not sufficiently aware of the importance

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\* More's Practical Piety.



which is to be attached to the spirit and temper of such *Morning* devotion in the *Family*. The truth is, that these seasons may, in general, be regarded as the index to a man's life, and the probable condition of his Family through the whole day; while the evening prayer itself, will as generally respond or testify to the truth of this remark. Should any Parent not have before observed this sufficiently, let him only recollect, that, as the spirit of prayer must, of necessity precede the act itself, so the *design* of this exercise is not merely to excite a devotional frame only while he is engaged in it. Its influence, if he and his family have engaged with sincerity, will remain with them, not only after they rise from their knees, but it will extend through the day to its close, and in proportion as they possess the spirit of prayer, will it thus extend; so that "we may often judge better of our state by the *result* than by the act of prayer."

The importance of such an extension of influence, or devotional consciousness of the Divine Presence, the Christian reader will be fully impressed with, if he observes what takes place at Evening Family Prayer, or even private devotion afterwards. Have you never then observed, that "we cannot, in retiring into our closets, change our natures as we do our clothes? The disposition we carry thither will be likely to remain with us. We have no right to expect that a new temper will meet us at the door. We can only hope or fear that the spirit we bring thither will be cherished. It is not easy, rather it is not possible, to graft genuine devotion on a life of an opposite tendency; nor can we delight ourselves regularly, for a few stated moments, in that God whom we have not been serving during the day. We may indeed, to quiet our conscience, take up the employment of prayer, but cannot take up the state of mind which will make the employment beneficial to ourselves, or acceptable to God, if all the previous day we have been careless of ourselves,

and unmindful of our Maker. *They* will not pray differently from the rest of the world, who do not live differently."\* On the other hand, the consistent Christian Parent, from the morning itself, looks forward to the hours of business and household care. His very supplications have an immediate reference to these hours, intending, whatever he does, "to do all to the glory of God." He is not to be engaged in any pursuit, or even amusement, inconsistent with such an intention; and he is not going to any place of which he need be ashamed, when he comes to his knees in the evening. Remembering that "the wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way," he, as it were, clears this way before him as he goes; and thus, if in the morning, the devotions of the Family were set forth as incense, at the close of the day, the lifting up of their hands is as the evening sacrifice. Presenting themselves and their supplications before that altar which alone sanctifieth both the giver and the gift, in the name of Jesus they resign themselves to God. "To Thee," they say,

"To Thee our evening homage paid,  
And daily faults confess'd,  
We, confident thou art our guard,  
Resign our powers to rest.

Thus, in thy service, love, and fear,  
Let all our days be past;  
Then shall we nor impatient wish,  
Nor fearful dread the last."

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The advantages resulting from such morning and evening Family Devotion are incalculable. Here, however, I merely advert, for a moment, to its influence upon Parental Government, and its vital connection with Religious Education.

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\* More's Practical Piety.

“Children,” says Dr. Dwight, “naturally regard a Parent with reverence ; but they cannot fail to reverence a Parent, more or less, on account of his personal character. Wherever they have been accustomed to behold their Parent daily sustaining the office of a minister or servant of God, they necessarily associate with every idea which they form of his person and character, this solemn and important apprehension. Every image of this venerable relation presented to their minds, will include in it that of a divinely-appointed guardian of their spiritual concerns ; a guide to their duty given them from above ; a venerated and beloved intercessor for their salvation.” An addition to Parental Authority, so efficacious, and of such inestimable value as this, it seems impossible to conceive.

Such Family Worship, too, as that to which we have referred, in all its parts, “is in truth a primary branch of Religious Education ; as that education is a primary source of religion to mankind. Without Family Worship, Religious Education must always prove essentially defective ; and the instructions, the reproofs, and persuasives, be suspected at least, if not accounted, insincere.”

Should, therefore, any Parent be remiss and irregular, or conduct such worship in a slovenly or irreverent manner, why should he, at other seasons, complain of the difficulty which he finds in governing, or reforming, or educating his Children ? Is there not a cause ? Oh ! instead of quieting himself with the idea, that they are so froward as to frustrate every effort, and discourage every hope, let him rather trace the whole to the absence of the divine favor and blessing, and this absence to *his own* misconduct ; let him rather take shame and confusion to himself, and let him tremble lest the Almighty visit upon his posterity, the threatened reward of his own unheeding negligence and folly.

## SECTION SEVENTH.

DOMESTIC EDUCATION, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PURCHASED TUITION; THE OBLIGATIONS TO WHICH ARE NOT ONLY INDISPENSABLE, BUT UNTRANSFERABLE.

Domestic Education, a term of extensive import—in its most important sense cannot be purchased—nor its duties performed by substitute.—The Education of circumstances.—The Education of the dispositions.

IN the proper sense of the term, Education is a thing of great scope and extent; and within the doors of a household, it is of a far more important and extensive character, than any thing for which the Children *can* be sent to schools of any description whatever. It affords, however, matter at once for surprise and deep regret, to observe how much this superior department of Education, which no wealth can purchase, has been overlooked; more especially since it is one in which the rich have little if any advantage over the poor. For Education, in its largest sense, as it is enjoined in the word of God, includes the training up of a Child—the bringing him up, or educating him, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; so that Education, in this sense, includes the whole process by which a human being is formed to be what he is, in principles, and habits, and cultivation of every kind.

Now, whatever proportion of all this may be in the power of Parents, a smaller still, and that which has much less influence in forming the character, can be directed or acquired by purchased tuition of any kind. Besides, it is, and must be, by far the most valuable part of Education which cannot, by any possibility, be purchased with money. This is one of those beautiful and benign arrangements of Infinite Wisdom, in which “He regardeth not the rich more than the poor;” since this species of Education “cannot be gotten for gold, neither can silver be weighed for the price thereof.” Neither can this parental department of Education, by any ingenuity of man, be *transferred* or undertaken by others; for it will be seen, after every vain expedient, that Parents *will*, and *do*, and *must* here educate their Children. In one word, as neither love, nor friendship, nor wealth, can turn the course of nature, so neither can they relieve Parents, whether rich or poor, from those obligations which God, and nature, and their interests too, alike demand and enjoin. Let not the reader search about for exceptions. Exceptions may and do exist; but such, after all, is the course of nature, or, in other words, the will of God.

Under these circumstances, let no Parent complain of his limited means—of his other occupations—or of any disadvantages in his situation,—let him only fix his eye with vigilance on that department of parental training, which is at once unpurchaseable and untransferable. You engage for your Children, and with considerable anxiety, even the best masters in every department, and you do well, and nothing more than is incumbent; but in the business of education, *properly so called*, they can do but little for you!

Addressing myself, therefore, especially to Parents, I would say—Placed by the all-wise providence of Heaven in such a peculiar situation, it will be well for you to keep

especially in view, what may be denominated, the Education of circumstances, and the Education of the dispositions.

I. THE EDUCATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES.—Let purchased tuition be carried up to the very highest perfection, and let neither money nor wisdom be spared in reaching this height, of such vital importance in the training of Children, is that department to which I now refer, that it can, and, if neglected, will, undermine and undo the whole, as well as render many efforts in educating the disposition altogether abortive. Suffer me to explain my meaning.

In the laudable anxiety of their hearts, two Parents, with a family of infants playing around their feet, are heard to say—"Oh! what will—what can best educate these dear Children?" I reply—Look to *yourselves* and your *circumstances*. Maxims and documents are good in themselves, and especially good for the regulation of *your* conduct and *your* behavior towards them; but with regard to your Children, you have yet often to remark, that many maxims are good, precisely till they are tried, or applied, and no longer. In the hands of many Parents they will teach the Children to talk, and very often little more. I do not mean to assert, that sentiments inculcated have no influence; far from it: they have much, though not the most; but still, after all, it is the sentiments you let drop occasionally—it is the conversation they overhear, when playing in the corner of the room, which has more effect than many things which are addressed to them directly in the tone of exhortation. Besides, as to maxims, ever remember, that between those which you bring forward for their use, and those by which you direct *your own* conduct, Children have almost an intuitive discernment;

and it is by the latter they will be mainly governed, both during childhood and their future existence.

The question, however, returns, What *will* educate these Children? And now I answer, "Your example will educate them—your conversation with your friends—the business they see you transact—the likings and dislikings you express—*these* will educate them; the society you live in *will* educate them—your domestics *will* educate them; and whatever be your rank or situation in life, your house, your table, and your daily behavior there, *these* will educate them. To withdraw them from the unceasing and potent influence of these things is impossible, except you were to withdraw yourself from them also. Some Parents talk of *beginning* the education of their Children: the moment they were capable of forming an idea, their education was already begun,—the Education of circumstances—insensible education, which, like insensible perspiration, is of more constant and powerful effect, and of far more consequence to the habit, than that which is direct and apparent. This education goes on at every instant of time; it goes on like time—you can neither stop it, nor turn its course. Whatever these, then, have a *tendency* to make your Children, that, in a great degree, *you* at least should be persuaded, they will be."

The language, however, occasionally heard from some Fathers, may here not unseasonably be glanced at. They are diffuse in praise of maternal influence; and, pleased at the idea of its power and extent, they will exclaim, "O yes, there can be doubt of it, that every thing depends on the Mother." This, however, will be found to spring from a selfish principle, and from anxiety to be relieved from mighty obligations, which, after all, cannot be transferred from the Father's shoulders to those even of a Mother; to say nothing of the unkindness involved in laying upon her a burden, which nature never intended,

and never does. Her influence, as an instrument, indeed, a Husband cannot too highly prize; but let no Father imagine that he can neutralize the influence of his own presence and his own example at home. He cannot if he would, nor can he escape from obligation. The patience and constancy of a Mother are, no doubt, first mainly tried, but *then* those of the Father. The dispositions in each Parent are fitted by nature for this order in the trial of patience; but, from the destined and appropriate share allotted to each, neither of the two parties, when in health, can relieve the other.

Addressing myself, therefore, to both Parents, I would say, "Contract to its just and proper dimensions the amount of all that purchased Education can do for you, and expect no more from it than it is truly able to perform. It can give instruction. There will always be an essential difference between a human being cultivated and uncultivated. In the department of purchased tuition, you will portion out to the best advantage many of those precious hours of youth which never will return; and such employment will lend you powerful aid in forming those personal habits which lie within the province of parental education; but rest assured, and lay it down to yourselves as a cardinal principle, that the business of education, properly so called, is not transferable. You may engage a master, or masters, as numerous as you please, to instruct your Children in many things, useful and praiseworthy in their own place, but you must, by the order of nature, *educate* them yourselves. You not only ought to do it, but you will perceive that, if I am correct in what I have stated, and may still advance, you *must do it, whether you intend it or not.* "The Parent," said Cecil, "is not to stand reasoning and calculating. God has said, that his character *shall* have influence; and so this appointment of Providence becomes often the punishment of a wicked or a careless man." As



Education, in the sense I have explained, is a thing necessary for all,—for the poor and for the rich—for the illiterate as well as the learned, Providence has not made it dependent on systems, uncertain, operose, and difficult of application. Every Parent, therefore, save when separated altogether from his Family, may be seen daily in the act of educating his Children; for, from Father and Mother, and the *circumstances* in which they move, the Children are daily advancing in the knowledge of what is good or evil. The occupations of the poor man at his daily labor, and of the man of business in his counting-house, cannot interrupt this education. In both instances the Mother is plying at her uninterrupted avocations, and her example is powerfully operating every hour, while at certain intervals daily, as well as every morning and evening, all things come under the potent sway of the Father or the Master, whether that influence be good or bad. Here, then, is one school from which there are no truants, and in which there are no holidays.

True, indeed, you send your Children to another school, and this is the very best in the whole neighborhood; and the character of the Master there is not only unexceptionable, but praiseworthy. When your Children come home, too, you put a book, of your own selection, into their hands, or even many such books, and they read them with pleasure and personal advantage. Still, after all this, never for one day forget, that the first book they read, nay, that which they continue to read, and by far the most influential, is that of their Parents' example and daily deportment. If this should be disregarded by you, or even forgotten, then be not at all surprised when you find, another day, to your sorrow and vexation, and the interruption of your business, if not the loss of all your domestic peace and harmony, that your Children only "know the right path, but still follow the wrong."

Sure I am, that you would rather come to any trial, than come to such a distracting conclusion as this. Well, then, say to yourselves—What became of Children when there were no books whatever in existence? How was it that Abraham and Job, and the Parents of such times, acquitted themselves so well, and were even so successful in regard to their Families? Nay, how was it that the generation which was *trained* even in the wilderness, between Egypt and Canaan, should turn out to be perhaps the very best which Israel ever could produce during their existence as a nation? As a reproof to their posterity, was it not to them that the Lord looked back with such complacency, many ages afterwards, and of them that he then said—“I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals,” or steadfast love, “when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel *then* was holiness unto the Lord.” How was all this? Simply because these Parents well understood the subject to which we now refer; and because that generation had so far adopted the advice of Moses on principle, and acted accordingly.\* To all succeeding ages, these and many others will prove standing witnesses to the power and importance of what has already been styled the Education of circumstances, and the Education of the disposition.

2 II. THE EDUCATION OF THE DISPOSITIONS.—As the Sacred Scriptures have entered so deeply into the various dispositions of the human character; explaining, with great minuteness, and almost infinite variety, not only what they are, but what they ought to be; I presume that you will make them your guide, in training or educating the dispositions of your Children. As the only certain

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\* See Deuteronomy vi. 6—9, and xi. 18—21.

and solid foundation, you will therefore, of course, begin with

*Religious Instruction*, properly so called. As a basis for such instruction, I cannot conceive of any thing which is once to be compared with the law of God, and that simply as it was delivered, and is recorded in Scripture; for it is a singular fact, that, with the exception of a very few words, which can be left without any loss or injury to a future period, the law which binds angels as well as men, is so expressed, as to be level to the capacity even of a child. We have no ambiguity, no perplexity, or high-sounding words here. The majesty of thought is indeed divine; but as angels themselves, when they did address men, spake with great simplicity of language, so the Lord of angels, knowing not only the perversity of human nature, but the limits of human reason, has condescended so to express his will, that, in his law especially, there should not remain the shadow of an apology for not understanding it. The statute laws of Great Britain are said to amount to about twenty folio volumes, and the unwritten, to many more; yet, after all, cases are occurring, even in our day, to which neither of these can reach! Digests of these laws are also still only in the course of publication, and commentaries are endless; while, in regard to the divine law, it has been both *summed up* and *expanded* by its Author, in a style and manner equally plain and striking with the original code itself! Never was any law so briefly comprehended, in only one sentence, without losing one iota of its import and intention, as this has been. Two commands only, like pillars of the moral universe, comprise the whole; while these are "so intelligible, so easily remembered, and so easily applied, that they are at once level to the capacity, and ready for the use of every moral being." '*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy*

*heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'

Yet, plain and perspicuous as is this law of ten commandments itself, its expanded interpretation is not less remarkable for the same qualities. In the interpretation of human statutes, the explanation or expansion has very often had the effect of only involving the law of the land in greater obscurity ; and human comments on things divine, have not unfrequently had the same effect. Not so when God condescends to become his own interpreter. This he has done abundantly, and perhaps on no subject has he been more copious, than in the varied interpretation of his own law. For why ? His law is but the transcript of his own glorious character ; and taking the Scriptures as a whole, what are they, in truth, but " this law expanded into more minute precepts and multiplied applications—enforced by the happiest comments, and illustrated by the most useful examples—but, above all, by the example presented to us in the all-perfect and glorious life of the Son of God."—" Thy law," said he, " is within my heart ; I delight to do thy will, O God."

Take then this law as the basis of your religious education—the only basis, assuredly, of all the religious instruction, which produced that fine generation in the wilderness, to which allusion has been made. Explain to your Children, why it was that our blessed Lord summed up his ten commandments, in two. Dwell upon this summary, occasionally. Explain every *word* of it, as far as you can, and they are able to bear it. You will, of course, try to instruct always *persuasively*, and most by example ; but be not discouraged at their not comprehending the whole. It is a common mistake to under-rate the capacity of Children on religious subjects ; but depend upon this, you will often find more difficulty in explaining human

language than divine. Go on ; and by here a little and there a little, like the small rain upon the tender grass, let them be taught to observe, the *personality* of this summary—the *authority* of it—its *spirituality*—its *extent*—and the divine *benevolence* running through the whole.

Perhaps the next subject, in point of importance, is the violation of this law ; for they will very soon indeed remark its violation by the young, but especially by the old. Now, as an understanding of the nature of sin, so far from leading to its commission, lies at the foundation of genuine religion, explain to them, as the Scriptures so powerfully, yet prudently, enable you to do, wherein the sinfulness of sin consists. On this point let there be no misunderstanding, much less confusion or ignorance, so far as you can explain it. Never attempt too much ; but, at all events, let sin be regarded as that which stands opposed to the divine character, and show that it is forbidden by him, invariably, because such is his character, and therefore his will. “ All unrighteousness is sin,” and “ sin is the transgression of the law,” may seem, at first reading, to be inspired assertions, fit only for the contemplation of manhood. But this is a great mistake. The conduct of your own Children will not unfrequently, alas ! furnish you with a commentary on both passages. “ Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” Indeed there is a guileless simplicity in Children, which seems as though it were providentially intended, to lay them open to the Parent’s judgment of their state, and character, and condition ; and wo to that Parent who takes not every advantage of these early days, these first and singular opportunities, which, when once lost, never, never return again !

Amidst all this species of instruction, tenderly administered, and patiently repeated, be, however, most especially careful, that they can observe *your own* dread of sin, and

*your own* fear of offending God in any way; for surely you must have observed, how much Children are afraid of any thing, at which their Parents express or evince alarm; while, at the same moment, your dread of sin must appear to them to be only an effect of your veneration for God, and your love for his character. *The fear of Isaac*, was an expression of Jacob's, descriptive to his own mind of the God of his Father; which he seems to have carried about with him throughout life: at one period, preserving him from the fear of man, and at another, expressive of his own most solemn sense of obligation to the Almighty. Whatever instructions you give, therefore, on the subject of sin or salvation, be assured that, in connection with the divine blessing (for which you daily intercede,) their effect must depend, in a most material degree, upon your Children, not only observing that you esteem all Jehovah's precepts concerning all things to be right, but that you yourself *hate* every false and every wicked way.

With regard to the Gospel of Salvation, as you have been laying the foundation for its being so denominated, you will certainly not forget to explain the precise meaning of the terms. Be sure that they at least understand the substance of that which constitutes these "glad tidings." Not only lead them to such summaries as 1 Corinthians xv. 3, 4, but dwell on the person, and the character, and the words of the Saviour—the various incidents of his life—the expressions of his heart—and his peculiarly affecting discourses towards the close of his obedience unto death. Explain to them his whole life, as a course of steadfast, and uninterrupted, and perfect glorifying of God, by an obedience to the law; as being also at once a course of substitution for sinful men, and an all-perfect example to his followers. Nay, so explain these as to show, that his whole life can be accounted for, on no other principles. Dwell upon his cross as an atone-

ment for sin ; by which God, who has been so dishonored, and offended so justly, and we, who have offended without cause, may be again *at-one* or agreed. Follow Him to the glory to which he is gone. Let them know that he there lives—there reigns—there triumphs before his ancients gloriously.

There are few subjects respecting which Children are more pleased to hear, than the heavenly world ; as if, in effect, they were telling their very Parents, that they have been born for immortality, and have already set out upon their mysterious journey to the skies. If you then only read the Sacred Volume, with the requisite dispositions of mind, while you will be easily able to explain that state of glory, but taking away all the drawbacks and inconvenience, the griefs and sorrows of the present scene, you will be far from saying, that you can only dwell upon the subject, *negatively*. This, you will say, is but one view that is given to us, chiefly with the design of supporting us through this vale of tears.

No ; if indeed you yourself are come “unto Mount Zion—and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem—and to an innumerable company of angels—to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven—and to God the Judge of all—and to the spirits of just men made perfect—and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant—and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel ;” or, in other words, if your “affections are set on things above, not on things on the earth,” then will your Children know this, and see it, and believe it. Here a little, and there a little, by line upon line, and one casual remark after another, you may go forward without disquietude. God has promised his especial blessing ; and on other days and years, your Children may be even heard to say—“However much we are pleased to read them, we

want no *arguments* in favor of Christianity, external or internal. My Father and Mother," says one, speaking for the rest, "I am sure, were consistent Christians, and they were truly happy, and amiable, and interesting, in the exemplification of that religion, which I can never for a moment doubt that they possessed. By all this, when alive, they allured to brighter worlds; and now that they are gone, it really seems as though it were, in a humbler sense, to prepare the way for us. Jesus indeed hath done so, and perfectly; but at least it appears to us, as though such Christian Parents were not without their share of influence, in the same direction. At all events, I am sure of this, that their usefulness and influence did not die with them; and I am also sure, that *this* world is not now to me, in all respects, what it was then; and that in *that* world, I feel a tenderness of interest, which, but for them, I might have either never felt, or never felt to the same degree."

Surely this would prove reward, rich and ample, for all your pains and patience, when fulfilling, from day to day, a duty which God and nature so evidently and strongly imposed. Though even this is far from reaching what often happens. Long before you leave this changing scene, they may give you the most indubitable and delightful evidence, that in due time they will follow you to that unfading inheritance "into which no enemy can ever enter, and from which no friend ever departs."

Besides all this, Parents themselves especially have to look forward. With them the day is turned, and the days of darkness may yet be many. At such a season, oh, what value is often stamped on these patient and assiduous endeavors, in training up a Child in the way in which he should go! Whether to Father or Mother, I would say—Is it a small matter, think you, when you are come to



descend the hill of life, and the knees wax feeble, that then—

“When thou wilt need some comfort to assuage  
Health’s last farewell, a staff of thine old age ;  
That then, in recompense of all thy cares,  
Thy child shall show respect to thy gray hairs ;  
Befriend thee, though of other friends bereft,  
And give thy life its only cordial left?—  
Aware then how much danger intervenes,  
To compass that good end, *forecast* the means.  
His heart, now passive, yields to thy command ;  
Secure it thine—its key is in thine hand.”

In one word, with regard to Christianity, let the regulation of the *judgment*, a reference to the *conscience*, and the impression of the *heart*, be your habitual and ultimate aim, in all that you say or do. Care not for worldly, and, above all, what are called fashionable ideas on this subject. Do your duty : and ever rest assured, not only that “the most important and purest source of knowledge is the simple and unprejudiced study of the Bible,” but that of all books in existence, the Scriptures, as a whole, are most intelligible to Children. The fundamental truths drawn from this source, to which I have adverted, remember also, belong to no one rank in life only. In these, Children, as such, are not only interested, but to them, they are of equal importance, whether they are rich or poor, whether they are to travel the lowest or the highest walks of society. Rely upon it, *that* education which does not fully, and carefully, and patiently communicate these truths, must ever prove essentially, not to say cruelly defective.

The whole circle of dispositions I need not, perhaps could not, go over ; but a few of those, for which no *school* ever was, or ever can be opened, will sufficiently explain what I intend, and, I would fain hope, impress the minds of some Parents more deeply, with the vast

importance of this untransferable department of parental duty.

✓ *Wisdom and Prudence.*—The wisest of men has long ago told us, that Wisdom ‘dwells’ with Prudence; yet many there are, who never think of these, though the King and Queen of all the excellencies in the human disposition. They aim at learning, and the subtleties of speculative knowledge, rather than wisdom. They fill the memory and warm the fancy with fictitious narrative, instead of strengthening the judgment, regulating the conscience, or training the will. Instead of laboring to make their Children wise and prudent, conscientious, and considerate, and humane, their main object is to make them clever, and expert, and fine scholars; so that ultimately they may, if possible, be rich and admired. The great matter, in short, is, that, in their day, they may ‘make a figure’ in the world. As the method pursued feeds at once the vanity of both parties, as well as that of their connections, Parents are at great expense, and their Children at great pains, to gain this knowledge and these accomplishments; yet, oh, what a poor conclusion is at last gained, though often not gained! At how much less expense of money, and though more of personal labor, yet of personal profit, might they have made them wise, and prudent, and fit for the bustle and the business of life.

Parents should ever remember, that there may be those who must and will make a trade of mere learning, and who may sink it down into a mercenary, pedantic, and merely mechanical thing. To neglect the higher ground on which nature hath placed them, and deliver over their dear Children to such, all the while conceiving that, when they have paid the school-fees, they have done their duty, and are really determined to give them, what is often

strangely called, 'a good education,' is a mistake for which they will, another day, pay very dear. What they thus sow they shall one day reap; and if any Parents wish to avoid such an error, let them only contemplate sedately the difference between learning and wisdom, and they will soon, not only pause, but pursue a more excellent way.

Learning is good in its own place; but it should not be forgotten, that it is simply a collection of the excellencies of others laid up in the memory. Shallow draughts, the too common result of such a race after accomplishments, only intoxicate; and even when learning is pursued to a height, it is but a poor acquirement compared with wisdom. This is the calm and regular government of the soul, leading its possessor to observe true measures, and suitable decorum in words, in thought, and in action. Learning will civilize, and polish, and refine, but of itself cannot moralize or sweeten the temper, or abate resentment. On the contrary, by itself, it sets a keener edge upon the calamities of life, and renders the man or the woman impatient and peevish, if their merits are not appreciated, as their vanity suggests they should be. In the whole world there is perhaps no man so much alive to misery, and in fact so miserable, as a *profligate scholar*, while his profligacy may, in most cases, be traced, if not to the example, yet to the neglect of his Parents. They observed not, or would not observe, the difference between learning and wisdom. They gave him the one, and paid for it too, frequently saying, that they felt resolved to spare no *expense* in giving him 'a good education;' but they neglected to *labor* in their own appropriate sphere to communicate and instil the other.

Learning alone is captious and arrogant, indiscreet and ill-mannered, presumptuous and addicted to dispute. Wisdom is modest and unpretending, gentle and peaceable,

full of respect for inferiors as well as superiors, and full of respect for all. Learning alone, also, is not only affected and full of pretence, but it consists in talk, rather than in action ; while wisdom is active and efficacious ; manages and governs ; is never troublesome ; and when it seems so, is never out of time or place. If, then, there is such a superiority in wisdom, patiently acquired at the side of the household fire, over merely acquired knowledge, let Parents beware of their Child being brought up to be *a mere scholar*.

It is certainly a curious circumstance to see these two so often separated—a learned man without wisdom, and a wise man with but little learning ; but this is a separation which might most frequently, and with great ease, be traced to the Parents of these men. Since wisdom, therefore, is not taught at any school, and the wisdom of which I speak cannot there be infused, it remains for Parents *alone* to turn out such men and women into the world as have a measure of both in union. They *may* pay for learning, but they *must* teach wisdom. At all events no one else will—no one can. It is not the teacher's business, in general, but it *is* the Parent's, universally, to say—"Wisdom is the principal thing : my son, get wisdom ; and with all thy getting, get understanding." When the boy reads, and acquits himself well, the teacher may indeed say—"I taught the boy," but it remains for the Father or the Mother to add, with far different feelings, "I have taught him in the way of wisdom, and I led him in right paths. Often, often have I said—'Be not wise in thine own eyes : trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy paths.'"

Prudence, too, or wisdom applied to practice, or the practice of acting with uprightness, it is your province to teach ; for though the inconstancy and uncertainty of all

sublunary things render it a difficult acquirement, still there is such an excellency, and one of great value. Though "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor yet riches to men of understanding," still there is an order and succession in human events, which render prudence of essential moment. There is a *time*, and there is a *manner* too, in human things: hence the wise man's heart is said to "discern both time and judgment."

*Truth and Sincerity.*—Telling the truth, upon all occasions, can only result from loving it; but as no one can be expected to see the beauty, as well as the justice of truth and uprightness, between man and man, or child and child, except he be instructed in and by the truth or word of God; so upon you, in a special and peculiar degree, must depend the means by which alone your Children are to be possessed of this conscientious and willing regard, to the dispositions of sincerity or integrity, in all they say or do. The understanding of these fundamental truths of Christianity, therefore, to which I have adverted, however much they have been overlooked or disdained, will be found, I am persuaded, the seed, and the only security of that sincerity and regard for truth, on all occasions, which you desire to infuse. I trust you know Him who "desireth truth in the inward parts," and who alone can create in your dear Children that spirit in which "there is no guile." He alone "in the hidden part" can "make them to know wisdom"; and to him therefore must you ever look: for not only is "understanding a well-spring of life to him that hath it," and the "wise in heart called prudent," but "the heart of the wise teacheth his *mouth*, and addeth learning," and sincerity and truth "to his *lips*."

There is one melancholy reason for you, as Parents,

paying a vigilant regard to truth and accuracy in the most trifling occurrences of life yourselves; that is the degree of falsehood and mistake which exist in the world. "Nothing but experience," said Dr. Johnson, "could evince the frequency of false information, or enable any man to conceive that so many groundless reports should be propagated, as every man of eminence may hear of himself. Some men relate what they think as what they know; some men of confused memories and habitual inaccuracy, ascribe to one man what belongs to another; and some talk on without thought or care. A few men are sufficient to broach falsehoods, which are afterwards innocently diffused by successive relaters." In the training of Children, therefore, a strict attention, on the part of Parents, to truth, even in the most minute particulars, is of the first importance. "Accustom your Children," said the same author, "constantly to this; if a thing happened at one window, and they, when relating it, say that it happened at another, do not let it pass, but instantly check them; *you do not know where deviation from truth will end.*" "But," said a lady at the table, "little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a-day, if one is not perpetually watching." "Well, madam," he replied, "and you *ought* to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth, than from intentional lying, that there is so much falsehood in the world."

Should you, then, only guard yourselves, habitually, against inaccuracy and exaggeration, you will also encourage your Children uniformly to tell the truth, whether for or *against* themselves. To assist you in promoting this, you will find in the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, most powerful assistance. See Moses frankly and openly leaving it upon record, not only that his brother had been verging towards idolatry, and his two nephews

struck dead, but that he himself was a man "slow of speech;" Isaiah, that he was "a man of unclean lips;" Jeremiah, that "he could not speak, for he was a child;" Amos, as artlessly telling, that he "was no prophet, neither a prophet's son, but an herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, when the Lord took him as he followed the flock, and said to him, Go prophesy unto my people Israel."

Point your Children to such instances in the New Testament, as that of Matthew telling us himself, what the other evangelists have not, that he had been a "publican," which in those days was often nothing short of an extortioner. Show them, that when the disciples, all united, could not cure a man, they tell us, and Matthew, one of themselves, must tell us also the cause—their unbelief; that they all agree in leaving upon record their ambitious contest for superiority, as to which of themselves should be the greatest; and after all, their universal departure from Jesus when apprehended. Show them that none of the evangelists conceal Peter's fall; nay, that Mark, who is supposed to have been under the eye of Peter, records it with additional aggravation, noticing also what the others had omitted, that warning which the first crowing of the cock should have given him. So also Luke neither conceals the contemptuous opinion which the Jewish Sanhedrim had of Peter and John, nor the still more contemptuous idea which the Athenians entertained of Paul; while, at the same time, Paul himself regards Luke as "the beloved physician," if not "the brother whose praise was in all the churches."

If any man will not believe such speakers of truth as these, you can say to your Children, then there is no help for him. Greater marks of sincerity can nowhere else be found; and this which you have pointed out to them is but one of the features of sincerity—that they always

tell the truth, whether it is for or *against* themselves. And of what advantage is that to them now that they are gone? or to the cause which they had all espoused? Why, that their character as men is unimpeachable, and that their testimony is now, and ever will be, invulnerable. The very infidel, yes,

“The infidel has shot his bolts away,  
Till his exhausted quiver, yielding none,  
He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,  
And aims them at the shield of truth again;”

but still in vain, and so it ever must be. Now, if your Children only possess this disposition, whether you leave them rich or poor, you will have implanted one of the best securities for their being respected, and respectable, whatever be their station in future life.

If, however, you really wish them to possess this, or shall I say, inherit it from yourself? then will you *never* amuse them, as some foolish people do, by attempting to deceive them: and then will you *never* employ cunning, or artifice of any kind, to gain your end, or, as some strangely dream, save trouble. Artifice is detected by Children far sooner than many imagine; and once detected in *you*, you have given your character a stab. You will also as carefully beware of urging your Children strongly, or with violence, whether of temper or manner, to *confession* of any thing, even of any thing which you suspect; and should you even inadvertently, at any time, accuse a Child *falsely*—a mistake which inevitably tends to break the spirit, and diminish his sense of integrity—then, for such a mistake, you *must* make an apology to your Child.

Have patience, then, and look up to the Implanter of this invaluable disposition; and the day may come, even in this life, when you will receive your reward; when you will be able, without any danger of increasing the vanity



of your Child, to address him in terms such as I hope, at present, meet your warmest wish. "My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine; yea, my reins shall rejoice when thy lips speak right things."

*Industry and Economy.*—"Industry is the source, and economy the preservation, of all the comfortable subsistence of man. But industry, as is proverbially observed, is not natural to the human race. On the contrary, it is the result of education and habit only. Accordingly, the savages in all countries, being uneducated to industrious exertion, are lazy in the extreme, and are roused to toil only by the calls of hunger. This cannot even be begun, as the education whence it is derived cannot exist to any considerable extent, but in *families*; nor by any other persons except *Parents*; nor at any other period beside *childhood*. Without families, indeed, industry would not exist; and without industry, the world would be a desert.

"Economy is not less necessary to human comfort than industry, and is still more unnatural to man. It demands the attention of every day to those things which we are to preserve; and this attention is more irksome than labor itself. Fewer persons overcome their reluctance to it. Savages are always squanderers. Exposed as they are perpetually to want and famine, and frequently and distressingly as they suffer from these evils, such is their reluctance to this employment, that they go on from age to age, wasting, and suffering, and perishing.

"Early, watchful, and long-continued parental education, will therefore alone establish a habit of either industry or economy. The attention, the authority, and the example of *Parents*, are all equally and indispensably necessary to the creation of these habits; and without them all, they cannot, in any extensive degree, exist. Savages, indeed, have families, and are married *Parents*.

It may, therefore, be asked, Why their Children are not educated to these habits? The answer I have already given. Neither the attention, the authority, nor the example of such Parents, are at all exerted for this end, so far as their male Children are concerned, and very imperfectly with regard to the other sex. Of these, however, both the industry and economy fully answer to the degree of education which they receive, and to the opportunities which they enjoy of exercising them. My position is, without a domestic education these things would never exist; not that *that* education, be it what it may, or that a mere domestic existence, will give them birth. Besides, savage Parents neither understand nor perform the great body of duties created by this institution: yet even *they*, in these, as well as in other important particulars, derive real and considerable advantages from the domestic state.”\*

✓ *Humanity.*—It is certainly a humiliating thought, that inhumanity, as the very word implies, is a vice peculiar to man; for in any species of the inferior creation we search in vain for a parallel disposition. Never do they devour and prey upon their *own* species; and when they do fight with each other, it is, generally, in consequence of their being teased and trained by the more savage disposition of human beings. Well then may humanity begin with initiating Children, from infancy, into the compassion which they owe to their own species. The following passages of Sacred Writ are not only so intelligible even to the young, but so beautiful and tender in themselves, that they require no comment. Only regard them as a proof of the divine will on this subject, and of the wonderful adaptation of his word, however

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\* Dwight.

despised, for assisting you in impressing the heart of a Child :

“Ye shall not afflict any widows or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.”

“Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.”

“If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him; but the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.”

“If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.”

“Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt in anywise bring them again to thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him again. In like manner shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his raiment, and with all lost things of thy brother’s, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.”

“Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh thou shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thine handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.”

Forget not to show them that humanity was to be cultivated, because God has so enjoined men; and you can also show them, that, for their own sakes, it was to be cultivated, as a disposition in which God delights. Hence no man was to curse the *deaf*, though such a one could neither hear the offender, nor feel the offence; nor was any one to lay a stumbling-block before the *blind*, of whatever character, who could never see who was the guilty party! The sick, too, you may remark, the infirm, and

the absent, were alike protected by that universal humanity, which, as it is enjoined, so it also cometh down from above.

Many such precepts will you find in the Sacred Volume; and if you desire a commentary, point your Children to such passages as that of the good Samaritan, mentioned by our blessed Lord, and those precepts of his, which prove so powerfully that his "heart was made of tenderness."

Much has been said, in our day, respecting cruelty to animals, and no reprobation can be too severe; but amidst all this just and merited reprobation, looking over the whole fabric of society, who will teach, or rather who *can* infuse humanity? However nicely balanced, and, at first sight, finely adapted, any act of human legislation should seem, though it were to pass both Houses unanimously, and with the concurrent voice of the entire nation, how inoperative and ineffectual must it prove in the result! And still would the question return, though with redoubled emphasis—Who shall teach, or who can infuse humanity? The truth is, that humanity lies within the sphere of sacred legislation; and this consideration renders its violation much more serious than many imagine;

"For many a crime, deem'd innocent on earth,  
Is register'd in heaven; and these no doubt  
Have each their record, with a curse annex'd."

Here, then, is one subject which purchased tuition cannot reach, and which is also above the sphere and power of legislation. One should have imagined, that the vexation which such cruelty has given to the benevolent and thoughtful mind, and the impotence of all human enactments, to produce the desired effect, might have led many to look round and inquire—Whether there was any such thing in existence, as a *fountain* of tenderness? or

whether the provision which the Almighty has supplied, had not been overlooked. Meanwhile, I may be permitted to avail myself, of this strong and pointed argument, in favor of the Domestic Constitution. As the gracious and Almighty Founder of the human family, intended thereby to produce and prolong natural affection, so it will ever be found, that Parents must prove the fountain of tenderness and humanity in a nation, if tenderness is there. To them, as such, after every expedient has proved abortive, must the wise, and the humane, and the men of active goodness, at last turn the voice of warning, and the supplicating eye.

Having found out the parties, who, by the institution and appointment of God, alone possess the ability, one point is gained. Let them only consider, how much it is their own personal interest, as well as their duty, that their will, in this matter, should correspond with their incumbent obligations. Addressing myself, therefore, to Parents, I would entreat them to observe, that the animal creation, whatever the jovial and the gay may think, actually possess rights; and, as the creatures of God, these rights cannot be invaded with impunity. Hence cruelty to animals, directly and powerfully tends to render those who are guilty of it, cruel to their own species. Hogarth's four stages of cruelty, shrewdly commence here, and end with murder—the gallows—and public dissection. So that carelessness in this one matter may, before long, in some way or another, rebound even upon yourselves, and may pierce you to the heart, or bring your grey hairs with sorrow to the grave! But you profess to believe in the corruption of human nature? Well, then, as the rebel is generally himself possessed of a tyrannical disposition, so man, generally, possessing this character, even from infancy, is naturally inclined to tyranny, and thirsts for the enjoyment of power. Now, to such a being, it must be

of immense importance, in the dawn of reason, that he should have explained to him, the limits of that dominion, which he is permitted to hold over the animal creation. And who is to do this, if you do not? You have already explained to your Child the *rights* of God? Explain to him also, as the Scriptures have so minutely and beautifully done, the *rights* of inferior animals; for be assured, that, however some may have overlooked the fact, it is within these two limits that you will find, as accurately delineated, the *rights* of man. Should he trample upon either of these rights, or overstep the limits here assigned him, he is not only out of his appropriate sphere in the government of God, but, for his presumption in so doing, he must suffer correspondingly.

On this subject, therefore, I cannot help again advertising to the Sacred Scriptures themselves, in proof of their singular adaptation for infusing humanity; if Parents will only use them for this important purpose:

“If a bird’s nest chance to be before thee, in the way, in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: but thou shalt in anywise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.”—*Deut.* xxii. 6, 7.

From such expressions you can direct your Children to a twofold exercise of humanity here enjoined by God—the sparing of animal life, when actually in their possession, and special compassion for the mother-bird. You can also explain, that, so far from such a passage giving any countenance to the barbarous practice of taking the eggs, or the young of birds, for purposes of sport or mere gratification, it is in effect saying, that they can only be taken for a lawful or necessary purpose; and even intimates, that if they are thus resolved to take the eggs, or the young, still in anywise they must let the dam go free. Remind

them, that the young had never yet known the sweets of liberty; but the mother-bird had; and that though, for any *lawful* purpose, they might be taken and used, she must, on no account whatever, be brought into a state of *captivity*. The value or the beauty of the bird was nothing; such Children were to be told, that, however trifling the crime might seem, and whatever arguments they might accumulate for detaining the captive, they could not reasonably expect to be the objects of God's peculiar care and attention afterwards, and that, another day, it might go ill with themselves.

I cannot, however, omit remarking, that a hint is here given, not only that it is the appropriate duty of a Parent to teach, but that childhood is the proper period for infusing humanity; for "it must not be denied, that the propensity to go in search of the nests of birds, is very natural to *Children*, and the temptation to rob them very strong. I am convinced, however, that, by proper management, they might be brought to take *more* pleasure in *knowing* of a number of nests, and in observing the progress, from their first foundation to the flight of their inhabitants, than in getting into their possession either the eggs or the young ones. I have known an instance of a family of Children standing single in this respect among a whole village, owing to the fortunate circumstance of their *Father* being a man of more humanity than his neighbors. He did not attempt to restrain his Children from going to search after nests, but he took frequent occasion to inculcate such lessons of humanity as effectually prevented the barbarous custom of robbing them. Let other Fathers follow his example; and let Mothers represent to their Children the cruelty of 'robbing a poor bird of her young;' for Mothers alone can feel what it is for a Mother to be deprived of her offspring."\*

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\* Young on Humanity to Animals.

“Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”—*Deut.* xx. 4.

From this passage you can easily explain, that the animals employed in the purposes of husbandry, are to enjoy a reasonable proportion of all those blessings, which their patient and powerful service contributes to procure, for the otherwise helpless and dependent creature, man; and that it was also most probably meant as an express prohibition of certain cruelties, whether practised among the surrounding nations, or even the Jews themselves. You can inform your Children, “that, among the Hebrews, the ox was employed in ploughing the ground; that treading out the corn was an employment in which his appetite would be strongly excited; and that the restraining him, even by the least cruel methods, from gratifying this appetite, in some degree, must have given him no common degree of uneasiness.” Remind them, that the treading out of corn was a season of great enjoyment to man himself; that “the joy of harvest” is a proverbial expression in Scripture; and then you may appeal to themselves, and ask, Whether they think it probable, that the man who, at such a time, would not obey this humane and reasonable injunction, was likely, upon any other occasion, to feel his heart expand with genuine gratitude, or generosity, or laudable joy?

In a country like ours, in which agriculture, and manufactures, and commerce, have been carried to such extent; where the horse, almost alone, ploughs, and draws, and carries every thing, man included; the violations of humanity must be most frequent with regard to this noble and valuable animal. Though the most spirited, yet the most tractable and docile of quadrupeds; possessing more than the courage, without any of the ferocity of the lion; though contributing most to the profit and pleasure of his owner; though, if deprived of



his services alone, Great Britain would still have made but a poor appearance, and never would have been what she has become; it is a melancholy reflection on the national character, that, of all animals, he has been most abused. Although I cannot quote any express passage of Sacred Writ, urging the duty of humanity to him, you can very easily explain to your Children some of the singular and satisfactory reasons for this omission, at least in the Mosaic code. That their use was forbidden to the Jewish people, lest such commerce with Egypt (which was the native country of the best breeds, long before Arabia possessed any), should lead to idolatry; lest that people might depend on a well-appointed cavalry, instead of the promised aid and peculiar protection of Jehovah; or lest they should be tempted to extend their dominion beyond the boundaries of the promised land, and so either obscure or defeat the prophecies relative to the Messiah. It will be seen, however, from what follows, that you can plead the cause of humanity to this animal, even from Scripture, and upon the highest grounds.

In many, if not in most of the Eastern countries, there is another animal, which stands in the same relation to them, as the horse now does to the nations of Europe. Though degenerated in this country to but a humble kinsman of the horse, whose principal inheritance is stripes and blows, while many young people especially, indulge in mocking the misery which themselves occasion; you may point out to your Children, in what a striking manner the Scriptures can redeem the subject of any such treatment, from idle ridicule or undue severity. It is indeed rather remarkable, that, in the only instance in which the Creator ever endowed an animal with the faculty of speech, it was to plead the cause of suffering humanity with the obdurate heart of man; and then, too, it was by an animal of this humble description. If, therefore,

eloquence and pathos are alike required, to expose the hatefulness of cruelty, let the unprejudiced ear listen to the following expostulation :

“What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times? Am I not thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden, ever since I was thine, unto this day? Was I ever wont to do so unto thee?”

The ferocity of conduct, far less justifiable than that of Balaam, which is daily occurring in this country, cannot then pass unobserved; while in ninety-nine instances out of an hundred, the animal is beat, for having not only done nothing wrong, but, it may be, obliged, if not saved, his owner. In the great majority of cases, when the animal discovers any restiveness, you can explain to your Children, that it generally ought to be regarded by the rider, rather as a hint for observation on his part. So the humane and considerate rider regards it, and has often indeed felt much indebted to the animal's sagacity. Thus, in the present remarkable case, the animal was beat, as the angel of God sternly noticed, not less than three times, though in the very act of saving the rider's life! “*Unless,*” said he, “unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain *thee*, and saved *her* alive.”\*

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\* I have already noticed, that this animal, in Eastern countries, is of a far superior breed; and though it was declared, by the Mosaic code, to be unclean, and no one was permitted to taste of its flesh, yet was it the animal employed both by the regal and judicial authorities. Hence the magistrate and judge are spoken of as those who “rode on white asses,” *Judges* v. 10. In those countries, though, when domesticated, he becomes gentle, and assumes a patience and submission more humble than his situation, in his natural state, or when unbroken, he is not only fleet and fierce, but formidable and *untractable*. It is, therefore, not unworthy of being pointed out to your Children, that it was such an animal, and in *this unbroken state*, that the Saviour, upon one remarkable occasion, deigned to use. He actually sent for it, and in so doing, desired that his disciples should remark, that this was a colt “whereon

On this subject, I notice only another passage of Scripture, which, however, I am the more disposed to do, from its being one of those, which I well remember my own Father quoting, again and again, with peculiar emphasis, to myself when young; dwelling occasionally on the four last words:

“Then said Jehovah (to Jonah), Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; *and also much cattle?*”

Here was a man, who had been sent by the Lord God of the Hebrews, as a kind of ambassador-extraordinary to the then metropolis of the world, and whose message had produced an amazing effect. His conduct from the beginning, and his spirit in fretting himself as it were to

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yet never man sat.” In all this there was something more than strict conformity to the law, and even to prophecy, *Zeck. ix. 9.* The meekness and humility of the King of Zion were on that day no doubt conspicuous; but in riding into Jerusalem, amidst the acclamations of a multitude, and the branches of palm-trees, which were more than sufficient to render unruly even an animal accustomed to be used; see this unbroken creature, all the while, quiet, and tractable, and steady! If men will not allow the Divine Power to have been here exerted, they will surely confess, that precisely the same thing had never happened before, and that it has never since. Often, indeed, does the Author of Nature send us to the beasts of the field for instruction, *Ps. xxxii. 8, 9.* But what an implication was there in all this, to that untoward generation, whom neither judgment nor mercy could move to submission! The Messiah, however, it seems, would not leave his meaning only to be inferred; for it is perhaps not in general observed, it was when thus seated, upon this very animal, now so docile, that upon his coming near, and beholding the city, he wept over it, saying—“If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes!” Such were the melancholy effects of voluntary ignorance and obstinate perverseness.

death, does indeed appear most unreasonable, and even inhuman. But all along it should seem the Almighty had a design to accomplish upon him, as well as on the Ninevites; and with both he succeeded: while his patience with the instrument, and compassion for those to whom he was sent, are alike divine. Now, here humanity to the human species and the animal creation is pled, at the same moment, by Him who "preserveth man and beast;" and pled so triumphantly, that it seems as if Jonah, deeply criminal though he had been, was confounded, and silenced, and humbled. He answered not a word; and, with these expressions in his ear, was probably prepared to serve Jehovah in a very different spirit throughout his whole life.

If I have dwelt too long on this disposition of humanity, let the cruelties so notoriously sanctioned, even in Britain, be my apology. To humanize man after he has grown up—to change the lion into a lamb, is the prerogative of God; but to train up a Child in the way in which he should go, is the injunction of the same God, who will never withhold his blessing upon his own express precept. Let us then apply to the instituted fountain, from whence humanity alone can flow; and with regard to the whole of the inferior creation, let Parents especially bear in mind, that

"The sum is this—If man's convenience, health,  
 Or safety, interfere, his rights and claims  
 Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.  
 Else, they are all—the meanest things that are  
 As free to live, and to enjoy that life,  
 As God was free to form them at the first,  
 Who, in his sovereign wisdom, made them all.  
 Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons  
 To love it too. The spring-time of our years  
 Is soon dishonor'd, and defiled in most  
 By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand  
 To check them. But, alas! none sooner shoots,  
 If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth

Than cruelty, most devilish of them all.  
 Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule  
 And righteous limitation of its act,  
 By which Heaven moves in pardoning guilty man ;  
 And he that shows none, being ripe in years,  
 And conscious of the outrage he commits,  
 Shall seek it, and not find it, in his turn."

*Generosity.*—In the study of the Jewish economy, you will find many things powerfully calculated to enforce this disposition. The original division of the land among the several tribes, being according to their families, each tribe was settled in the same district, and each family in the same barony or hundred. Thus, domestic virtue and affection had an extensive sphere of action. Not only was provision thus made for the happiness of moral and rural life, but the poor might everywhere expect more ready assistance, since they implored it from men whose sympathy in their sufferings would be quickened by hereditary friendship, if not by natural connection. Besides the tithe every third year for the poor ; and the seventh year, when the indigent, the widow, and the stranger, were free to use whatever the ground brought forth of itself ; to them annually belonged a share of the olive and the vine ; nor was there a *corner* of a single field, over the whole land, which was not to be left for them. Yes, *left* for them ; for though thus permitted to enter, in their season, into private property, they were not to be idle, but to gather and collect their sustenance. Nor was even this all—

"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast *forgot* a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow ; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree thou shalt not go over the boughs *again* : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not *glean it afterward* : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

Now, high as this ground may seem, teach your Children, in regard to the incumbent and delightful disposition of generosity, that we, as Christians, stand upon higher still. Point them to the "Father of Mercies" above, "from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift." In our world, he has much to do, every hour of the day, and every season of the year. On the produce of that year depends the existence of the world; but teach them to observe, that it consists, uniformly, of two parts—not only bread to the eater, but seed to the sower. Inform them, that the property of the Christian, if not of man, consists also of two such parts; that though the poor call one of these their *savings*, and the rich, their *fortune*, that both parties often labor under a great mistake. Ask them, What would become of the husbandman, were he to act by his *seed-corn* as the poor often act by their "savings," and the rich by their "fortune?" and ask them, What can become of the professing Christian who disregards that law of Heaven—"He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully?" Can such a man, say you, lawfully expect that "He who ministereth seed to the sower, will both minister bread for his food, and multiply his seed sown, and increase the fruits of his righteousness?" Certainly not; he never did, and he never will. Tell them, that this man even *reaps* sparingly, and that, even in this life: tell them, that if God does not keep him poor, which he often does, he may not grant him contentment; or that the evidences of his Christianity must remain, to his own mind, confused or dubious, and that the consolations of God are small with him!

Early, therefore, train your Children to the habit of giving away, *freely*. Mutual presents may be of service; but distinguish, as soon as may be, between the giving of that which costs nothing, and true generosity, which in-

volves self-denial. Inform them, plentifully, of truly bountiful men, and repeat, again and again, generous deeds. Admire, in their hearing, Araunah the Jebusite; and David, the king of Israel; and Nehemiah, the cup-bearer; and the poor widow that cast in all that she had, even all her living! but, oh! above and beyond all, Him who, “although he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.”

Accustom your Children, from early life, to observe, that “this is the way to thrive,” whatever the selfish and the covetous may say; and that, if Christians, and if (disgusted with the cheap and ostentatious giving which is still consistent with covetousness), they should only act on these scriptural principles, aiming after secrecy and delicacy in all that they do; then may they have even engraven on their tomb-stone, what was once placed over the grave of a good man, properly so called—

“What I spent, I have lost:  
 What I once possessed, now belongs to another;  
 What I gave away, remains with me.”

In regard to *Christian* generosity, however, a disposition which is yet far from being fully exemplified, never forget, that, as to *your* family, every thing will depend upon you, yourselves, *acting* on these principles. Then only will your Children experimentally understand, and admire, that saying of our blessed Lord, which, though not recorded by any of the evangelists, had sunk down into the ear, or rather lay embalmed in the heart of the primitive Christians—“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

*The Love of Nature.*—It is certainly not a little extraordinary, that so many Parents have overlooked, or at least neglected, this most powerful assistant, in training the dispositions of their Children. In building cities, had

men succeeded also in banishing from them the admiration of nature, or had only certain individuals of the species been susceptible of interest in her wonderful productions, this neglect might have been regarded only as a consequence; but the reverse of all this is the fact:

“’Tis born with all; the love of Nature’s works  
Is an ingredient in the compound man,  
Infused at the creation of the kind.  
And though the Almighty Maker has throughout  
Discriminated each from each, by strokes  
And touches of his hand, with so much art  
Diversified, that two were never found  
Twins in all points; yet this obtains in all,  
That all discern a beauty in his works,  
And all can taste them: minds that have been form’d  
And tutor’d, with relish more exact,  
But none without some relish, none unmoved.  
It is a flame, that dies not even there  
Where nothing feeds it: neither business, crowds,  
Nor habits of luxurious city life,  
Whatever else they smother of true worth  
In human bosoms, quench it or abate.”

Children are fond of tracing effects to their cause; and should they wish you to account for this innate disposition in the compound man, that much-neglected book, the Bible, will assist you in this, as in all other things, with reference to whatever is either useful, or valuable, or necessary, in the analysis of the mind, so far as the bulk of mankind is concerned: for

“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.—And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, *to dress it and to keep it.* And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, *to see what he would call them;* and whatsoever Adam called every



living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field!"

Were I not afraid of extending this volume too far, already perhaps too large, I should have dwelt upon this important branch of Education. Remember, however, it is at once your business and your office, to excite and cultivate this disposition in your Children. The contemplation of the heavenly bodies—the structure of the globe—the vegetation of plants—the formation of animals—the order and regularity of nature, with the changes that are perpetually taking place in it—the correspondency, the sympathy, the harmony, and the remarkable proportioning of one thing to another, which reigns throughout the universe—the power and the greatness of God, as seen in the minutest objects; with the striking difference between the works of nature and of art,—the contemplation of any of these, and especially of these in succession, has a most powerful effect upon the youthful disposition. You believe that God hath made every thing beautiful in its season and place; and you know that every animal, and vegetable, and mineral, has its own specific and appropriate *use*? Explain these, then, as far as you can. Such instruction from the lips of a *Father* or a *Mother* is invaluable. Perhaps you can direct their attention to the forecast and industry of the ant—the ingenious and indefatigable labors of the bee—the instinct and affection of birds, in building their nests, and rearing their young—to the habitations of the beaver—the transformation of the caterpillar, or the silkworm?—But I forbear; the theme is endless, and even infinite. Many of these subjects, if nature is not before you, you can find in books; but the more familiar operations of nature you cannot omit—such, for example, as the labors of the husbandman.

Thus, even by your occasional conversation, might you discover to your Children, that

“Religion does not censure or exclude  
 Unnumber'd pleasures harmlessly pursued ;  
 To study culture, and with artful toil  
 To meliorate and tame the stubborn soil ;  
 To give dissimilar, yet fruitful lands,  
 The grain, or herb, or plant, that each demands—  
 These, these are arts pursued without a crime,  
 That leave no stain upon the wing of Time.”

Do you ever walk with your Children, and observe them disposed to notice the earth, when it teems with fragrance, and is covered with beauty? Indulge them in such remarks; admire, with them, the works and wonders of your common Creator; and having so indulged them, you can easily discover to them that you derive *your* main enjoyment, from a filial confidence in Him who made them all.

Certainly it is to be lamented, that so many Christian Parents, seem not to be aware of the frequency, with which their own Redeemer conversed with the works of his hands, while here below; though if they only take up their Bible, and “walk with Him” through the evangelical history, they will find scarcely one chapter, in which Nature is not pointedly regarded. The shining of the sun, and the falling of rain; the light of the world, and the face of the sky; the aspect of the morning and the evening; the lilies of the field, and the birds of the air; the grass of the ground, and the salt of the earth; the dove and the sparrow; the sheep and the goat; the fox and the wolf; the ass and the camel; the serpent and the fish; the crowing of the cock; the hen and her chickens; the eagle pouncing on his prey: in short, nothing escaped his gracious and condescending eye. The artlessness of Children, and the harmlessness of doves, he recommended

to his followers; and when he saw a multitude of sinful men, he was wont to be moved with compassion, and compared them to "sheep without a shepherd." The operations of husbandry, he was ever commending to notice; and, to his eye, a lily in its native bed had more of outward adorning, than even Solomon, when arrayed in all the insignia of his kingdom. Adam, in perfection and innocence, when naming his animals, as their Creator brought them to his feet, or when conversing with his garden, was as nothing to this. Strange indeed! that those who listened to the Saviour's *manner* of reference to such objects, at all times so apposite, and often so affecting, could not descry the voice of Him, by whom all things were created, "whether they be things in heaven, or things on earth, or things under the earth." Nature, then, it is true, had met with her own Creator, and never, since the morning stars sang together, had she appeared so subservient to religious instruction and reproof, excitement and delight.

Now you have not been born too late to profit by all this. If Christian Parents, you live under the dominion of the Messiah, and possess every advantage in following his example, at whatever distance. The productions of his hand are ever the same, and, to the present moment,

"Still all are under one. One Spirit—His,  
 Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,  
 Rules universal nature. Not a flower  
 But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,  
 Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires  
 Their balmy odors, and imparts their hues,  
 And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,  
 In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,  
 The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth.  
 Happy who walks with Him! whom what he finds  
 Of flavor, or of scent, in fruit or flower,  
 Or what he views of beautiful or grand  
 In nature, from the broad majestic oak

To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,  
 Prompts with remembrance of a present God.  
 His presence, who made all so fair, perceived,  
 Makes all still fairer. As with him no scene  
 Is dreary, so with him all seasons please."\*

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Were it at all necessary, I ought to have extended this section to various other subjects: such, for example, as those of Patience and Submission—Temper and Fortitude—the baneful Evils arising from *Vanity and Affectation*—the *Companions* with whom your Children come in contact—and the imperious necessity of you, as Parents, making careful selection; for if Christians themselves are in imminent danger from “evil communications which corrupt even *good* manners,” what shall we say of Children whose principles are not yet fixed—whose manners are not yet formed?

Not, however, wishing to extend the subject farther than what seemed necessary for the object in view, I would rather refer to such works as the *Practical View of Education*, by Mr. Babington—the anonymous author of “*Hints for the Improvement of Early Education and Nursery Discipline*”—the *Parental Duties*, by Mr. Braidwood—*Domestic Religion*, by Mr. Innes—and the various publications by the amiable family of the ‘*Taylors*’—a family which has, as a Family, done more for Domestic Education, in the proper sense of the terms, than perhaps any other in Great Britain.

In conclusion, may I now presume that the reader is fully convinced, that a Parent stands on ground *peculiar*

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\* These poetical quotations, I hope the reader well knows, are taken from Cowper,—one of those few poets whose writings will probably be quoted, even in the days when “one song shall employ all nations,” and the knowledge of the Lord shall have covered the earth, as the waters do the sea.

*to himself*—far above that of any mere teacher, and that his responsibility, both to God and to his Family, extends correspondingly?—He is to teach, it is true, but he is also to repeat, repeat, repeat with patience, and even pleasure. Here a little, there a little; as he rises up, as he lies down; as he sits in the house, or walks by the way: he or she it is who is to recall—explain—rectify—illustrate—enforce many things many times, or many times the same thing: he it is who is appointed to be the prompter of his Children—the instigator to good only: he it is, as has been said, who looks not to the infantile mind, as to an empty vessel, into which knowledge only is to be poured. The mind of his Child he would rather compare, in one sense, to the Bee in the first period of its existence, which is fed by the labors of others; but, ere long, as he expects, this little mind will rise, and lift its wings in vigorous employment, to collect sweets from every field or flower.

## SECTION EIGHTH.

### CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

To Christian Parents—extent of that authority which has been conferred by God—the power of affirmation or testimony lodged in the Parent's hands alone—the signal blessing, promised from above, upon their exertions.—To the Ministers of Christ—powerful aid afforded to them by the Domestic Constitution, without either invading the peculiarity of their office, or relieving them from the assiduous discharge of any of its duties—the interesting aspect of the primitive Church in relation to Families—the beauty and value of Christianity when possessed by Children—those Families where the Domestic Constitution ought to be seen, in all its beauty and its moral power.

### TO CHRISTIAN PARENTS.

THE character with which, as Parents, you have been invested, were it duly considered, is, of itself, sufficient to induce frequent reflection on that constitution of things, at the head of which you stand. You may not, however, have observed before, that in the very constitution of a Family, there is involved so much of solemn and sacred duty ;—solemn, inasmuch as the authority conferred upon you, approaches nearer to absolute authority, than that of any other which man can lawfully sustain ;—and sacred, inasmuch as this authority has not only been conferred upon you by God, but to Him, for the exercise or neglect of it, you are at last to render an account.

Solemnity of mind, I admit, is not natural, and often

not welcome, to man ; but as no disposition of mind is more favorable for the accomplishment of duty, surely you will not object to the means of promoting it?—Contemplate then, at least occasionally, the extent of your authority as a Parent. This will not only evince the truth of all that has been advanced, so far as that is consonant with Scripture, but it will solemnize and prepare your mind for the various duties imposed upon you. Say to yourself,—“ Although the extent of my dominion is the smallest upon earth, why is the authority given me the most extensive out of heaven ? Within my own family, there is no one who can, none who should dispute this with me ; and of those around my dwelling, from the highest authority in the state to my next door neighbor, there is no one disposed to interfere. Above myself, upon earth, there is none ; and to myself I sometimes feel as though, in this matter, I were only next under God.” True, as it regards mankind in general, whatever be your station, low or high, as Parents, unquestionably, you are next under God—even that God whose name is “ Jealous ” and “ the Father of Mercies.” An office-bearer in the kingdom of God, the Minister of Christ, who has to watch for souls, stands on more serious ground ; but with this one exception—a position more solemn than yours, as it regards relative duty, I confess I am unable to conceive.

The extent of your authority, however, is not the only consideration, which is calculated to increase in you solemnity of mind. By whom was this authority lodged in you, and for what end was it so deposited ? No human power, however extensive, can be absolute : nor was there ever conferred by God any authority on man, but upon conditions expressed or implied ; and if much is implied in your very character as Parents, certainly also, in the Word of God, much has been expressed, in direct reference to that authority with which he has clothed you.

To the word of God, therefore, would I most earnestly and affectionately commend you ; and should this attempt only induce you to use it, with greater care, as your *invariable and habitual Family-book*, my end is gained. The Scriptures alone, be assured, at once properly and perfectly can instruct you, into the real character and full extent of this connection between Father and Child. They alone, without mistake, impartially and fully explain the obligations of either party ; and they alone furnish *motives* sufficiently powerful to secure the regular, and even delightful performance of all that is incumbent : they alone strikingly paint to you, without exaggeration, instances of failure, whether of bad or even good men, ending in exquisite misery to themselves, and in the recorded displeasure of God himself ; as well as instances of remarkable success, ending in blessings to unborn generations.

Thus, after all, you observe the advantages conferred upon you, as far as monition and encouragement go, are equal to all your responsibility, great, confessedly, as that responsibility is. Nor is even this all : there are two considerations to which, in concluding this volume, I would invite your particular attention, as involving the most powerful encouragements which can be conceived. They are encouragements, too, which, as with outstretched hand and pointing finger, are presented to you from above ; while, at the same time, they still farther unfold the interesting and singular character of that constitution of things, which it has been the design of these pages to illustrate. I refer to the *power of affirmation or testimony*, which is lodged in your hands *alone*, with reference to your Children ; and the *promised blessing of God*, upon your exertions as a Parent.

1. In illustration of the first of these, let it be remem-



bered, that, as Children have every thing to *learn*, it is absolutely necessary that there should be one quarter, in which they may and must place implicit confidence. These earliest years are the most important of human existence; and yet, during these years, the Child must depend almost entirely upon you. What does the dear little prattler know about evidence, or the degrees of it? and if his faith were to depend on evidence, what would become of himself personally, and what would become of the time and patience of his Parents?—In short, the stock of faith, or implicit dependence, which he requires, until he reach, perhaps, his twelfth or fourteenth year, may be said to be more than he requires afterwards.

Now, who is it that has instinctively qualified him for reliance, for implicit reliance on your testimony? For see, if you conduct yourself wisely, notwithstanding all the corruption of human nature, see how absolute is your sway over this little immortal being! See how instinctively he watches you, and follows, and imitates! See how he looks at your face, and your hands, and all your motions! Observe especially, at certain seasons, how peculiar to him, while he sits on your knee, is the very tone of your voice! And what use are you to make of that voice? What influence are those tones to have on his ear?—tones which cannot be supplied by any other individual? And how singularly providential is the adaptation of this infant's mind to *your* instructions, when it is observed that *mere testimony or affirmation* is all that is wanted—for upon your simple affirmation he confidently, and without hesitation, relies? Only treat him with fairness and integrity; inform yourself, *accurately*, of what you wish to inform him; and though he will charm you, and affect you, and even puzzle you with inquiries, still he will receive *your* testimony. Though he may, and will, early evince that he is a sinner—that he has a will

of his own, and is but too prone to disobedience ; still, after all, acting as has been stated, long will it be before he will doubt your word ! Go on then. If you really desire to make the most of the day, set out early in the morning. Go on, filling and informing his mind—storing it with truth and facts, but, above all, heavenly truth ; and he will receive all, without any hesitation, as far as his memory and understanding can go. Yield to the glow of parental love, and pour forth valuable instruction on his infant mind, with all the tenderness and warmth of which you are capable. Long after you are cold in the grave will these tones of yours, and these truths, and all your favorite maxims, nay, your very smiles, and sighs, or tears, will return upon him. Then, too, will these facts, which he is daily verifying, and these truths, enforced in the days of infancy, by all that was tender and impressive in a Parent's voice ;—then will they remain, and produce impressions more indelible than any of their successors ; nay, even when he becomes *his own* master, and can range abroad, and receive instruction from teachers and companions of *his own* selection, then indeed, if you have done your duty, will he ascertain, that you stood in such a relation to him as no one else ever *can* occupy. In this sense it may with truth be said, though he should have ten thousand instructors in future life, yet can he have but *one* Father.\*

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\* Here I am fully aware, that there is scarcely a more common complaint in regard to a disobedient child, than that he will not *listen* to advice, to remonstrance, or entreaty. But this complaint, I am afraid, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, is very far from being fair. As well might the negligent keeper of an orchard complain, that his branches will not yield to be trained. In such a case you would say—“ My friend, all this is idle talk ; your season is over and gone ; you have been absent, or unequal, or negligent, at a former period. Where were you when these branches were twigs ? Where, when they might have been trained with a hair,

Now, with a power such as *this* in possession, should Parents prove, I do not say disobedient, but merely inattentive to the order of heaven and the appointment of the Almighty; surely, surely, you can feel no surprise if you see the curse scatter itself from them by virtual contact and the channel of relationship—no surprise when you see such Parents leave behind them a series of crimes, with their appropriate punishments, to be divided, by entail, among their Children; ay, and if these Children approve the deeds of their Parents, I may safely add, among their Children's Children! Nor, however much this sad entail may be lamented by other relations, and they may somewhat mitigate its pressure, can even their united efforts ever entirely break it! An appeal to the

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and when they bent at your breath? So is it in general with these inattentive or regardless Children, now indeed so loudly complained of. They are proofs of some previous delinquency on the part of their ordained guardians—assuredly *not* proofs of the powerlessness or inefficacy of parental instruction."

But is there no contrast to all this? Certainly there is—many a triumphant one; and many more there might be. Observe that Parent who assiduously improves his earliest opportunities; his family illustrates the truth of all that has been said: for what is the reason that the Parent has such a hold of the Infant and Child, and so little of the Youth? And what the reason, that his instructions or warnings are so marvellously powerful in the one case, and so powerless in the other? Why, because in the latter case, the season of God's appointment had in some way been disregarded; in the former, it had been seized and improved, when instruction was easily taken in and hardly lost again. Hardly, did I say? I may go farther than this, and with great safety. If due care is taken, to your joy you will find, that, so far from your early impressions on your Child failing, subsequent impressions serve rather to indent the former, than to efface them. Other instructions may be contained in the mind, and be of great service, but those of the Father and the Mother were *imbibed*. That which comes *first*, takes almost absolute possession, and carries with it all the authority you could wish; there being no antecedent notions to dispute the title or call the truth in question.

Almighty himself alone, on the part of such Children, becomes absolutely necessary. "Be ye not as your *Fathers*," said Zechariah, "unto whom the former *prophets* have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways and from your evil doings; but they would not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord. Your *Fathers*, where are they? and the *Prophets*, do they live forever?"—Oh, what questions! how cutting and heart-searching to these their Children!—"Our *Fathers*," say they, "alas! many of them lie buried in the ruins of Jerusalem; the bones of others, if not bleaching in the desert, or if not to be seen rising, in many a mouldering heap, on either side of the way; lie entombed, far from Judea, within the broad walls of Babylon." And the *prophets*, do they live for ever? "For ever, say they; alas! our *Fathers* either would not suffer them to live, or embittered all their days." Well then, Jehovah, by the *Prophets*, replies—"But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the *Prophets*, did they not take hold, or overtake, your *Fathers*? and they returned and said,—Like as the Lord thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us."

Thus it is, as an old writer would tell you,\* that, "as from the eyes of some individuals, and the tongues of others, there issues an evil influence; as between the vital spirits of friends and relatives there is a cognation, and they refresh each other like social plants; so in Parents and their Children, there is so great a society of nature and of manners, of blessing and of cursing, that an evil Parent cannot perish in a single death! neither can holy and consistent Parents eat their meal of blessing alone; but they make the room shine like the fire of a holy sacrifice;" and the fire, thus kindled, will propagate itself,

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\* Jeremy Taylor.

and shine upon other walls, long after their pilgrimage is ended. Well, therefore, may the voice of rejoicing and salvation be heard in the tabernacles of the righteous.

2. And now what shall I say of the peculiar blessing of the Almighty, which has ever rested on the head of those Parents who have fulfilled their natural, and reasonable, and incumbent obligations; and in exact proportion as they have fulfilled them? For although it is true, that Jehovah never will reject the forecast or the labor of man, but calls him to be heedful and diligent; still, if he is defrauded of his due honor, and if Parents will adventure on any thing, only upon trust in their own wisdom and strength, all their toil is vain. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." For a Parent especially, in such a case, "it is vain for him to rise up early, or sit up late;" he, and, it may be, his Children, will, in the end, only "eat the bread of sorrows:" while, on the contrary, the Father and Mother who seek supremely the divine favor, not only sleep with serenity, but secure just as large a portion of earthly good as is consistent with their real advantage, and that of their Children after them. Any man, it is true, of a careless or indifferent character, may leave wealth behind him, but there is one important question which follows—Will it prove beneficial, or a source of true enjoyment? For this, he had made no provision. When toiling on from day to day, all the while he had forgotten *that* blessing, which "maketh rich, and bringeth no sorrow with it;" though there is not in Scripture one single passage, which regards not this as a material ingredient, in all *hereditary* possessions. On the other hand, whatever be the rank of the good man, they represent him as standing on the highest ground, with regard to his legacy. As far as his

family is concerned, he requires not the intervention of wealth, as it is called, to die *well*. Has he been pious, and industrious, and generous? and has he paid regard to his family, not as being to survive him only, but as bound, with him, for immortality, and soon to follow him? Then all is right. Rich or poor, such a man *must* leave “an inheritance to his Children’s Children.”

Here, however, in reference to the divine blessing, it seems impossible to forget one singularly-affecting passage in the evangelical history:

“And they brought young Children unto him, that he should touch them;” or, as Matthew has it, “that he should put his hands on them and pray; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them—Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.”

Christian Parents, who dwell upon such a scene as this, and these heavenly expressions, must surely derive, not only instruction, but the greatest encouragement from both.

In contemplating the scene, you cannot overlook the parties who brought these Children, and their purpose in so doing, however dim and indistinct their views. Luke, in somewhat amplifying this clause, says, “they brought to him *also* infants;” as though he had said, “having seen in how many ways He could remove the diseases of riper years, and infuse vigor into the decayed limb, or the decaying frame, they hoped that Children *also*, who had before them the whole journey of life, might not be sent away empty, should he but condescend to touch them, or lay his hands upon them.”

What though the apostles themselves might frown, or censure, and forbid, or imagine that it were below the dignity of the Son of God, to notice little Children? If ever the Saviour was displeased with his disciples, it was

then; nay, then, it seems, he was *much* displeased; and so far from the parties who brought these little ones being censured, the apostles themselves, under rebuke, must give way, and stand aside, and make room for their approach.

See then the King of kings take up, in succession, these Children in his arms, and lay his hands upon them—the ancient and solemn manner of blessing among the Jews. Surely this was no vain show, nor did the Messiah pour forth his prayer into the air, or pronounce his blessing in vain. And what should he request for them, but that they might be received among the number of the Sons of God? For let us hear it again—What were the precise terms in which he had invited their approach? “Suffer the *little children* to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of *such* is the kingdom of God.” Who then would, or who dare shut the gate upon those, or even neglect them, whom the Saviour will not permit to be forbidden? As Parents, oh! what could you desire more than this? Millions of infant souls, it seems, compose the Family above; and assuredly, in point of number, such souls must form no insignificant proportion of the celestial millions. Regret not now, my reader, for one moment, that nothing is here said of the Parents of these Children, either as to their character or motives, or whether those who brought them even sustained this relation; for with regard to Scripture, as Mr. Boyle said, its very *silences* are teaching. It is with the Children, with the species as such, we have here to do; and, blessed be the Saviour! they actually form the foreground of this picture. Though never registered among the denizens of this little world, that is now of small account indeed, “for of such is the kingdom of God.” The whole species are safe, and beyond the reach of wo.

But they died, say you, some of them before they knew

their right hand from their left; and others, alas! more advanced, and, therefore, more engaging, yet never knew the difference between good and evil. Ah! so much the better for them. *That* was a knowledge which carried your first Parents out of Paradise, and this ignorance has not prevented your Children from entering into it. Thus, in one moment of time, could the divine Redeemer, by a few magnificent and gracious words, remove from the parental heart a load of anxiety—"for of such is the kingdom of God;" and as for the tender frame so soon consigned to its native element, though "in Adam all die," yet "so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Surely then this must be regarded, as one most solemn and delightful indication, of what was originally intended by the Domestic Constitution as such; while it involves certainly far more than a hint to Parents, as to how they should conduct themselves, with reference to Children who remain and survive. For was it intended by the Saviour to speak consolation only to bereaved Parents? Most certainly then he did this, as they, since that day, have often felt; but this as certainly was not all: he had been curing others, and conferring bodily health on many who were beyond the power or skill of man's device; and the blessing he now pronounced on those who needed nothing of this kind, must have chiefly referred to the great inhabitant within.

Surely then, I scarcely need to remind Christian Parents, that Jesus, though anointed above all with the oil of gladness, though far above all principalities and powers, is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." But, after such a scene as this, permit me seriously to inquire, How *you* have been acting by your infant Children? Although no mere local approach to the Saviour, in the days of his flesh, constituted, in itself, the acceptance of any one, and though no such approach on your part is possible now,



still I hope you know that you labor under no disadvantage whatever. Is Jesus indeed the same *to-day*? How then have you been acting towards Him, with regard to your Children? Have you, I do not say, ever, but have you often taken them up in your arms, and carried them to *His*? Even though some ill-informed disciples should forbid, or frown upon you, has your imploring eye looked still at Him? Then be not dismayed. You are aware, I trust, that the arms to which he looks are the arms of faith? and that the language to which he has never been known to shut his ear, is the prayer of faith? Then be assured—rely upon it—you have only to remember also, that it is good—assuredly good, both for yourself and your offspring, thus to pray habitually—to pray without impatience—without undue anxiety—without wrath or doubting; and again I say, rely upon it, your breath will not be spent in vain.

But have you never thought of so doing? Have you done so under some vague or lingering impression, that He cannot *now* lay his hands upon them?—that He cannot *now* bless them?—that He will not *now* pray for them, if you only ask in faith? How, then, can it be said that you have fulfilled a Parent's part? Nay, how can you be said to believe that Jesus is the *same to-day*? Ah! and since his smile and frown, his complacency and displeasure, are governed by the *same* unchanging principles, what is to become of you, if you so proceed? Did he frown? Was he much displeased with his disciples for forbidding these people, and will he smile upon *you*? Smile upon you as a Parent, though you seldom or ever tread in the footsteps of those unknown Jews, who were received with a benignity and condescension which will be for ever admired? Certainly not—it cannot be. Go then and approach him, without one faltering step. His words are as true, and they beam with as much benignity

and encouragement, at this moment, as they did on the day in which they were uttered. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

Far be it, then, from Christian Parents, who read these words, to lay them up in a treacherous memory. Assured that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," what though he should come and take away one—and another—and even another, at the season, too, when they are most engaging!—Still such Parents will continue to regard their Domestic Constitution, but as one unpretending scaffold to an eternal building! And though a scaffold which is to be laid aside when that building is finished, their object now is, that their family *entire* may form a part of it. In such a Family, therefore, it is not the statutes of the Lord only, properly so called, which are converted into "thanksgiving and the voice of melody"—the voices of such Parents are, not unfrequently heard in union, actually responding to these affecting expressions of their unchangeable Redeemer :

" We bring them, Lord, by fervent prayer,  
And yield them up to Thee ;  
Joyful that we ourselves are thine,  
Thine let our offspring be.

If orphans they are left behind,  
Thy guardian care we trust ;  
That care shall heal our bleeding hearts,  
If weeping o'er their dust !"

So far, then, from forbidden ground, it is ground to which they have been invited, on which these songs are sung ; where, fixing their eye on the Saviour himself, encouragements of the highest order are scattered all around him. For his sake alone, their Creator has become their reconciled Father, who will, with Him, most freely give them all things. Thus have they actually become heirs

to all the promises;\* so that, in virtue of their interest in them, and in virtue of that singular Constitution, at the head of which such Parents stand, they enjoy the high and signal felicity of becoming blessings to their offspring. The "Fathers to the Children make known his truth." If they *are* blessed, with believing Abraham, they *will* act, as Jehovah knew he *would*; and so, proportionally, they shall be a blessing. Yes, they shall, inasmuch as God hath not only given them an especial interest in the matter of the blessing, but, by his own divinely-ordered Domestic Constitution, hath given them, as guardian instruments, peculiar facilities for the communication of it. Yes, feeling an especial interest in the favor of God themselves, they not only may, but they do present, in supplication before God, the promises which he has given: in their musings and their supplications afterwards, they dwell upon the terms in which these promises are expressed, and upon the absolute character of these terms—these, at one season, they plead in the hearing of their Children—and at another, explain, with all the exuberant tenderness of parental affection. On these gratuitous expressions of divine love and mercy, it thus appears evident to such Children, that the hopes of their Parents alone do rest; while, to them, it is equally apparent, both from the style of their petitions, and their occasional conversation, that the meritorious ground, on which these promises themselves depend, or the meritorious security for their accomplishment, is, in their Parents' apprehension, the dignity and the death of our divine Redeemer—the only

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\* "For all the promises of God, *in Him*, are yea, and *in Him*, Amen, unto the glory of God, by us. Now, he which stablisheth us, *with you*, in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not, with him *also freely* give us all things?"—1 Cor. i. 20. Rom. viii. 32. See Ephes. i. 3.

and all-sufficient surety of that covenant, which is ordered well in all things, and sure.

In these few last words, however, I have touched a point on which the hearts of these Parents cannot remain silent.

“Can we ever forget,” say they, “some of the terms of condescending invitation by which we came here? ‘Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your souls shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David!’ Do we still but imperfectly know the advantages of that peculiar and ancient ground on which we stand? What though Gentiles once were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, nay, strangers from the covenants of promise? Surely now, even we may look up, and say, ‘Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father—our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.’ Yes, it was by an ‘old path’ indeed, and not untrodden, that we arrived here: the ground on which we stand, was marked out and occupied, even long before it was ‘confirmed’ to the Father of the faithful. Great, too, confessedly, as was the blessing conferred on him, never can we forget the Saviour’s having redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; ‘that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, through faith.’

But in being thus strangely permitted to call our Creator and Governor ‘Our Father who art in heaven,’ surely we forget not, for one moment, the glorious peculiarity of his unalienable character—that he is ‘the Father who judgeth according to every man’s work of what sort it is.’ In this we see the brightness of his glory, and forget not that our Saviour is the Judge both of quick and dead. As our Maker, He is our Governor; and the Fountain of all

being, we regard as the Fountain of all rights. From the first moment of our existence, our all was his—absolutely and unalienably his. It was in Him, therefore, no defect of title which induced his condescension. Publishing his very constitution, in the form of such a covenant, how can we but be filled with profound veneration and delight, ordaining it, as he has done, in the hands of such a Mediator! ‘Ordered well in all things,’ indeed it must be, since He is the surety—and sure, with a witness, as ratified by his blood. Thus it was, that, inviting our poor consent, he hath, blessed be his name! only *more deeply obliged us to our duty.*”

Let your eye, then, my reader, be fixed on this blessing of the Almighty; for this it is, in all cases, which alone commands success; nor need you hesitate to implore it, if your undivided hope rests on Emmanuel. For “thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come, concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me.” The arrow of such a supplicant comes, it is evident, from a bow fully bent; but still, if you only pray in that disposition of mind which simply corresponds to the many affirmations and condescending promises of your heavenly Father, all will be well with you and yours. What though all flesh is grass, and the glory of man but as the flower of the field? “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto Children’s Children—to such as keep his covenant—to *those who remember his commandments to do them.*”

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#### TO THE MINISTERS OF CHRIST.

IN closing this volume with a more immediate reference to you, I have done so under an impression, that, if there are any Parents in existence, who may be considered as

more interested than others in the present subject, you are the parties.

You may have observed, that, throughout, I have not confounded Parental Obligations, or the training of Children, with your obligation to fulfil the commission of our common Lord ; that I have not confounded the Domestic Constitution with the Church of the living God,—or, in other words, that, in tracing the weighty and incumbent duties of the Parental Character, I have not confounded Christian Education with the work of the Ministry, nor have I, so far as I am conscious, ever trespassed on what I believe to be the special, because the ordained, means for the conviction and the conversion of a lost world. This be far from me: On the contrary, there seems to me to exist between the successful exercise of your ministry, and the exertions of Christian Parents, that fine harmony which is at once apparent, and engaging, and useful, between all things of divine appointment.

Thus, if they are next under God, with regard to their Children, as Children, you also are next under Him, with regard to the entire Family, as souls. Upon your skill, or discrimination and affectionate fidelity in addressing these Families, much depends indeed. Under the weight and pressure of your responsibility, here and hereafter, you occasionally look around you, and say—"Brethren, pray for us." Now, do you intend by this, that they should pray for your success in the conversion of souls? To whom, then, I ask, can you cast an imploring eye, with more confidence, than to Christian Parents, especially when you see them sit before you, with their Children around them? Do they not frequently implore, that the divine blessing may rest on *them*? In their Family devotions, on some occasions, have they never been heard by God to express their desires, in some such language as this?—

“To thee each solicitous hour,  
We'll sigh for our infantine race,  
And say, O protect with thy power,  
And bless with thy Spirit of grace!  
May we their soft Guardians ordain'd,  
In this their progressive abode,  
With ecstasy see we have train'd  
The Sons and the Daughters of God!”

None, indeed, but a Pastor, knows a Pastor's cares ; but where will you—where can you find any Members of your flock more able or more likely to sympathize with your incumbent desire, and loudly-called-for anxiety, to be useful to the souls of men? and with regard to their Children especially, you well know, that there are not to be found in your audience any other individuals who feel an anxiety such as theirs. Lay hold then of this feeling as an auxiliary, and you will not do so in vain.

To the primitive Church, however, all the Ministers of Christ profess to look for encouragement and a Guide. When, therefore, you cast your eye over one or other of those epistles, addressed by men inspired, to the Church, as it actually appeared in their day, can you help being struck with the distinct recognition of the Domestic Constitution, in all its connections? Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, Master and Servant, lie embosomed in these letters. Not that every one who sustained such a relation was there : from the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom this was impossible ; though, in these days, in many instances, into the Garden of the Lord, the Family tree had actually been transplanted, with all its branches, entire ; and from the *style* of address to each of these parties, it may be presumed, that, in these churches, there were to be found, not only Masters, however rich, and Servants, however poor, but Parents, however old, and Children of the tenderest years. To have seized upon, not only the extremes of station, but the extremes

of age, was one momentous feature of the Church planted by the Apostles. Looking over the broad field of their exertions, in the service of their common Lord, we seem to hear, not only

“People and realms, of every tongue,  
Dwell on his love with sweetest song—  
But *infant* voices there proclaim  
Their early blessings on his name!”

But, say you, where now are the households which have been converted in a day? and where now the tens, nay, the hundreds, not to say thousands, who have bowed before the voice of a single address? Ah, where indeed! Though the Lord's arm is not shortened, that he cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that he cannot hear, these are questions into which, at present, I must not enter; but certainly they are far from being irrelevant to the ministry of us all!

In the meanwhile, however, and in the midst of such impotency, let it be our wisdom to ascertain principles, and look to individual cases. The skepticism expressed by many, in regard to conversion, may be easily accounted for; some of them affirming, in regard to the heathen abroad, that, until you civilize or *humanize* men, you need not attempt to Christianize them; that you must make them *men* before you can expect them to become Christians. But what shall we say in reference to the skepticism which as evidently reigns in others, with respect to Children, or young people, whether at home or abroad, while waiting, as they would tell you, till they come to what they choose to regard as the years of *discretion*? And what is the severe punishment laid up for Parents who labor under such want of Christian foresight—such want of faith and genuine compassion? Why, that these years, for which they idly waited, turn out to be the very



years of *indiscretion*? This, however, is an old offence; and, alas! it seems but too common to corrupt human nature. You have already seen how the Apostles themselves stumbled; but “there is no flesh in man’s obdurate heart; it does not feel for man;” and is often cold and indignant even at the young of the species.

“And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the Children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! they were sore displeased, and said unto Him—Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?”

No; whatever scribes and chief priests might say then, or men of a kindred feeling think now, the Christianity of very early life is a subject in which you will find no skepticism—no hesitation in the word of God; nay, it is one upon which the Saviour not only looked with a most benignant eye, but he still holds the broad shield of his protection over such early profession of attachment to his name. After having set a little Child in the midst of his disciples, and *finished* the lesson which childhood, as such, suggested\*—you hear him say in conclusion—“But

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\* Such a period of life is indeed fraught with instruction to the Christian Parent; for nature as such, whether physical or moral, always *repays* the labor bestowed upon it. The Saviour himself, who sanctified almost every object for the instruction or encouragement of his followers, here leads the way. When very young, you may therefore most profitably regard them, as appropriate emblems of those qualities which are the effect of regeneration. Then you will discover but little or no disposition to take precedence, or you will see them, regardless of external distinctions, cheerfully associating with their inferiors in rank or years; see them simple, artless, free from guile—without the love of money—without anxious care, yet submissive and very dependent—and, to crown the whole, disposed implicitly to credit either Parent. Let me ask, where you will find such a *combination* of qualities in those of riper age? How, then, can Parents trifle away those years? Such neglect is like the loss of the *spring* in Nature.

whoso shall offend one of these little ones, *which believe in me*, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Far, indeed, am I from taking this heavenly intimation in any other sense, than the words, in their connection, seem at once to convey. Nor am I surprised at the language employed for such an offence. What think you of poisoning a fountain, or nipping the bud in nature? Christianity, once possessed by a Child, bids fair to have justice done to it; the least offensive—the most engaging—the purest, and, generally, by far the most useful profession of Christianity, is likely to follow. Praise, it seems, by our Lord's reply, admits of *degrees*—and, it also appears, can, by him, be carried to the highest degree from the lips of children. As an evidence of the Messiah's claims, sufficient even for such a moment, never let it be forgotten, that in the very temple of old, with her priests and her scribes walking around, they were the hosannas of Children, which stilled and drowned the voice of these enemies and avengers.

One Child in particular, however, you remember, whose origin and history seem left on record, to illustrate that divine harmony which exists between domestic obligations, and the Christian Ministry, as such. From the days of his infancy he had known the Holy Scriptures; and though Paul rejoiced over him, as his own son in the faith, still he was affected greatly, when he thought of this child's obligations to his Mother and Grandmother! Now when Parental assiduity, and the preaching of the truth, had, as it were, embraced each other, and poured their respective blessings on the head of Timothy, what was the consequence? Why, that when but a young man, he was capable of being urged, by his spiritual Father, to reach the very height or acmé of all Christian excellence. "Let no man," said he to him, "despise thy

youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity or love, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

An "example" of these things did he urge? But are these all in which the Minister of Christ is to excel? Or is he left to gather, from general terms only, his peculiar obligation as a Parent of Children or the Master of a Family? What then, in these days, were the qualifications for *office*? Alas! my friend, what reply is ready for the man, for even any man who is able to stand up and say—"Look to the Children or Servants of that Minister! See how they conduct themselves, and judge how they must have been trained! Grace he cannot communicate, nor do we ask him; but has he been vigilant at home? Has he been patient and moderate at home?—generous, or given to hospitality, and not covetous? Has he, as a *sine qua non*, ruled well his own house, and had his Children in subjection with all gravity? Whence, then, this lightness—these expensive habits—and this insubordination? How can this man ever expect to make full proof of his Ministry? How can *he* take care of the Church of God?

These, my reader, if we are wise, are not *provoking* questions. No; they are but the reverberations of Infinite Wisdom, come from what lips they may; and they ought to induce every man, who sustains the office of the Ministry, or the office of a Deacon, frequently to observe, that the Great Head of the Church, as has been already noticed, by glancing at this subject, and fixing the eye of his associated people, at the moment of induction into both offices, intended, while providing for the government of his own Family upon earth, to bring up also that of the Domestic Circle, to the highest possible state of perfection. And O were these Families once but what they ought to be—once but what they might be—once what

the great Head of the Church hath actually demanded, and what therefore he must expect from them—then indeed would they prove, in their respective enclosures, like so many “trees of life” in the garden of the Lord.

For such a consummation, however, though not a groundless expectation, let no Christian Parent wait. The frame of human society is incessantly giving way; Families are daily breaking up; and the Church universal has yet to pass the scrutiny of an omniscient eye: then must every man’s work be made manifest—then must every man bear his own burden, and every man give an account of himself unto God.

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